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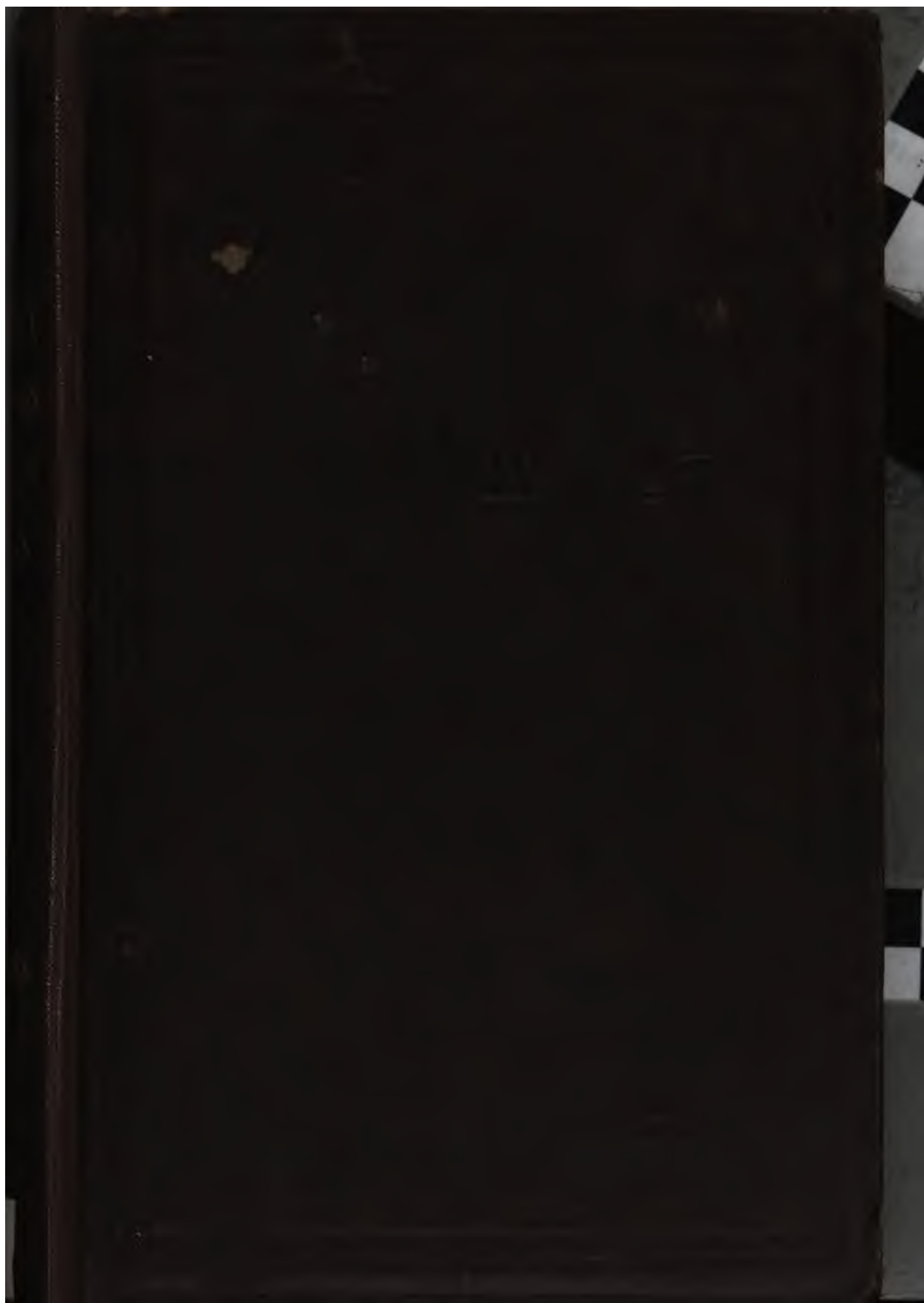
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THE

INFLUENCE OF ARISTOCRACIES

ON THE

REVOLUTIONS OF NATIONS;

CONSIDERED

IN RELATION TO THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE

BRITISH EMPIRE.

BY JAMES J. MACINTYRE.

/

" THEREFORE, SINCE LAW ITSELF IS PERFECT WRONG,
HOW CAN THE LAW FORBID MY TONGUE TO CURSE!"

SHAKSPERE.

FISHER, SON, & CO.
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P R E F A C E.

THIS Work is an attempt to bring from general history, ancient and modern, a few passages to bear upon the peculiar condition of the British empire, in its political, fiscal, commercial, and colonial relations, but particularly on those circumstances which affect the comfort and happiness of the great mass of the people.

This attempt may be compared, or likened, to the action of a man, with a sounding-staff in his hand, who walks over the surface of history, and endeavours to indicate where danger exists beneath, in consequence of the hollowness of the ground, or of the collection of materials in a state of fermentation, which will work into an explosion. The conclusion, or result of the investigation and comparison, is, that there is at present, in this country, the excited action

of that law of society that terminates in social convulsion, out of which will arise the body of military despotism, or, will emerge a new constitutional fabric, cemented in the alluvium deposited by the flood of revolution.

It is painful to reflect, that we cannot find out in the dominant party in the State, any extraordinary degree of human virtue, or a disposition to give up, voluntarily, a part of its usurped power over the fiscal or proprietary rights of the mass of the population, which would give to the surrender the grace, or at least the appearance, of a patriotic sacrifice. We can discover in the British Aristocratic power, no disposition to deliver on the altar of the country, the offering of selfish interests ;—and, in accordance with the principles of human nature, as displayed in historical action in every country and every age, we can only expect to see the power thus wielded, wrung from the possessors palsied by their terrors, or wrested from them by the moral force of opinion, or otherways.

This work, though of a decided character as respects its political views, cannot be entitled a work of a party nature, in the ordinary meaning of the

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expression. Its party character consists only in the advocacy of the great party or cause of the people. Throughout the whole of it, we are not aware, that the word Radical or Chartist appears ; and the two alternately dominant parties, Tories and Whigs, are only cursorily alluded to, in the consideration of the political events of the last few years. The classes of persons, who are politically called Radicals and Chartists, are, we presume, striving to escape from the effects of a system, which they find to be unjust and oppressive to themselves and families ; and if, in the endeavours to save themselves, their wives, and little ones, from the discomfort and probable ruin caused by unfair laws, they should adopt certain theories of government, the party that practises the injustice towards them, and perseveres in refusing redress, is responsible before God and the country for the consequences that may ensue.

In the conflict of interests, and amidst the confusion and uproar which result, the people are bewildered, and, day after day, sink into lower depths, and feel the increasing weight of burden without knowing under whose feet they are trampled down.

In times of religious persecution or political vio-

lence, when fires have consumed victims at the stake, or the scaffolds have been red with the blood of patriots, it has been the practice of those who commanded the executions, to cause drums to be beaten and shouts to be raised, to prevent the shrieks and cries from being heard, or to hush the last words of the dying patriot from rousing the feelings of his assembled countrymen. So it is with political parties in more peaceable times, when the people demand justice, and discuss the questions which most interest them. Their uproar and noise are raised, to distract attention from the main subjects; and in the halls of the legislature, hollow men are made to utter sounds, or individuals, who imitate grooms and gamekeepers, raise shouts and indecent cries to silence men whose arguments in favour of relief to the people cannot be answered. The noisy declamations in the senate, and the daily wagon-loads of newspaper discussion by party writers, are intended to drown the voice of pity, or to smother the cry of distress. The men who, in the senate filled with the ranks of party, stand up to plead a nation's wrongs, must have "their tongue in the thunder's mouth," to be heard above the clamour raised to hush the victims.

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This is not the place to describe the tactics of British party-strife, but it is necessary to refer to the attempts which are at present making to give to the country the appearance of a struggle between the landed interest, and the manufacturing, commercial interest, for political influence or ascendancy ; or to throw on machinery, and its uses, and its employers, the onus or responsibility of the distresses of the country ; or to utter economical jargon on joint-stock banks, and their effects on the monetary system and the encouragement of speculation. A great mass of such argument is the ruffle of the drums, to drown the cries of the wounded and the groans of the dying !

Let the people of Great Britain and Ireland, in the calm exercise of their common sense, bear in mind the following facts and statements.

The party or class of persons called the landed interest, have legislated for, and governed this country since the Revolution of 1688 ; and it is only within these twelve years that the manufacturing interest of Manchester and other places has been represented at all in the legislature. The laws, which the manufacturing classes and the vast ma-

majority of the inhabitants of this country complain of, were enacted long before the date of the Reform of Parliament. The very laws, for the encouragement of cotton-spinning and other operations by machinery, were enacted by the landed interest, and if this cotton-working machinery and other sorts of machinery be hurtful to this country, the landed law-givers are responsible for the consequences.

With regard to machinery interfering with manual labour—will persons have the goodness to think for one minute, and decide whether the race or class of labourers, called “*cotton-spinners*,” rose up *before* or *after* the introduction and use of cotton-spinning machines. The machinery called into demand—or into existence, if you will—the class of cotton-spinning labourers; and so it will be found with the persons employed in every other sort of machinery. On the first invention and use of a new machine, there may be a derangement or transition of labourers from one employment to another, but such is only temporary or local. What will be said of the machinery by which the scrawl of an author is converted into a printed book, such as this? The most useful and intelligent class of labourers em-

ployed on it, were not known in society, as a body, before the invention of the printing-press.* The party opposed to machinery, must wage war against the *principle* of it, and not against the mere materials of wood and iron, and it would be well that they at once settled the question by breaking their own heads on the printing-press.

“Machinery does not impair the fund out of which industry is supported, neither does it lessen the amount of industry, but only alters the distribution of it, and makes it more productive than before.” †

The party, who ruffle the drums of political strife, strike up, that this country is suffering under the effects of *over-production*, and yet they will find,

* For the history of this most valuable of all arts, I must refer to “*A Dictionary of Printers and Printing, with the Progress of Literature, Ancient and Modern, by C. H. Timperley.*” This is a work of the research and labour of many years. The author of it, in a note to his preface, informs his readers, that after having served his country, and obtained his discharge from the 33d Regiment, for wounds received at the Battle of Waterloo, he applied himself to the profession of a letter-press printer; and, with the enthusiasm of a man eager for knowledge, compiled a work which contains nearly a thousand closely-printed pages, full of interesting historical and biographical knowledge, relative to the art of Printing, and subjects connected with it.

† Dr. Chalmers’ “Political Economy: On Machinery.”

that *stocking-weavers cannot afford to wear stockings!* But no beat of drum will drown the fearful fact, that this unhappy class of labourers, and all others earning about ten shillings a week, pay in direct and indirect taxation on their food, *fifty per cent* of their hard-won wages! This is a fact demonstrated in this work. Another fact is established by the Gazette, that on the fifteenth of this present month, the duty on foreign wheat imported into this country, was twenty shillings a quarter, equal to *forty-six and a half per cent on the market-price of that necessary of life!* The duty on wheat and other farinaceous grain varies in its rate, but the fact has been demonstrated, that the taxes on corn have the effect of increasing the rents of land from 20 to 25 per cent: and another fact has been proved that a Duke, with an income from land to the amount of one hundred thousand pounds, receives in that sum a bonus, about four times the amount of all the taxes, direct and indirect, which he contributes to the support of the government and institutions of the country!

These few facts and figures give the key to the secret of the whole system of British fiscal arrange-

ments, and to the apparently complicated system of British politics.

Our whole system is founded on principles impolitic, unmanly, and unsoldierly. The impolicy consists in resting the revenue of a great empire on such a variable and uncertain source as consumption ; it is unmanly, by laying on the poor and weak what ought to be borne by the wealthy and strong ; it is unsoldierly, as it breaks the law, and disregards the etiquette of extreme danger. Nelson on the wreck, or Wellington in the siege, would have divided the weevil'd biscuit with the cook's mate, or the ration of brown bread and horseflesh with the common soldier. And why should it be different in aristocratic legislation ! Is a people to perish, on the discussion of the duty on a bushel of wheat ? or to pass through the flames of revolution, to obtain fair play and common justice ?

5, UPPER HARLEY STREET,
22nd April, 1843.

The Author of these pages cannot resist the opportunity of alluding to the melancholy event of the other day, the loss of the "Solway" steam-ship, and of recording the noble conduct of Captain Duncan, who in his death has done a heroic service to his country, by an example to all British seamen and soldiers to stand and sink with their vessels, or perish on their posts when duty demands the sacrifice.

Here was a man of the peaceful profession of the commercial seaman, and free from the excitement of battle and its emulations, calmly standing on the deck of his sinking vessel with the water up to his middle, and with active exertions and under the anxiety and responsibility of a brave man hurrying women and children into the boats: and as the water rose upon him, deliberately getting up on a higher stand, and giving his last commands to his sailors to save themselves in the rigging. Perhaps in the annals of danger there is scarcely to be found a picture of more calmness, humanity, and gallantry than exhibited by Captain Duncan, as described by the surviving officers and passengers of his vessel.

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THE
INFLUENCE OF ARISTOCRACIES
ON
THE REVOLUTIONS OF NATIONS.

BOOK I.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

ANALOGIES FROM THE INFERIOR ANIMALS, USEFUL TO MAN IN HIS SOCIAL
CONDITION.—THE INFERIOR ANIMALS LIVE, AND LET LIVE.

It might have pleased the Almighty Creator to have caused the sentient beings that he placed on the earth, to derive the nourishment for their bodies from particles of matter inhaled along with the breath of life. But this arrangement would have altered the nature, pursuits, and character of the creatures thus sustained, and have made them altogether different from what they are under the existing system. Their bodies are furnished with organs to convey into them food produced in the earth and water, and they are preserved and strengthened by means of substances daily incorporated. The necessity of providing daily food stimulates to active exertion every race of animals, from the elephant to the ant, and from the sprat to the whale; and each in its respective sphere obeys the

law of self-preservation. It has been adduced, as an instance of the benevolence of the Creating Mind, that the necessity to which the animal is thus exposed, is followed by great enjoyment in the act of satisfying the appetite. The pleasure that animals receive in the process of feeding is obvious to every person; the ever-eating cow in the act of rumination—the sheep nibbling the grass—the deer browsing in the forest—the rabbit munching its blade—and the horse over its heap of corn, are objects of quiet enjoyment. The clucking hen appears in an extacy of delight as she scrapes the ground, and gathers the grain for her joyous brood of chickens and herself—the honest household dog lying at the door with a bone between his paws, is the very picture of contentment;* but the energy of delight in the enjoyment of food is to be witnessed in the fierce carnivorous animals—the lion, or the tiger, or the wolf, seen in his iron-barred den, inspires terror in the spectator, by the very fierceness of his pleasure. All animals dislike to be disturbed while eating; but the carnivorous species are excited to a furious state by any attempt to deprive them of their food. This is a principle of animal nature which appears to be very much overlooked in human legislation.

There is, among the various races of animals, by their members, in their search of food, a strict adherence to the principle of “live and let live.” It is true that it is decreed that one species of animals shall live upon the bodies of another sort; this strikes our senses as an evil permitted in the physical world; but the cruelty is more apparent than real: for the irrational animals have not the faculty

* The epithet “honest” is here applied, as a well-educated domestic dog never steals.

of looking before and after, and consequently their terror of death is only felt in the pain of dying; and perhaps they suffer less agony by being devoured than by the lingering decay from hunger or disease. "A hare, notwithstanding the number of its dangers and enemies, is as playful an animal as any other."*

Although the lion and the wolf fall on and devour the ox and the sheep, still each lion and each wolf pursues his game unmolested by his fellows. It does not appear that there is any disposition, still less any power, in any one lion to appropriate to himself a herd of cattle, and to keep others of his race from touching the prey. So it is through all the races of wild animals. The finny nations, as they migrate through the ocean from pole to pole, preserve order in their progress. Among the herbivorous and gregarious animals, what a friendly feeling exists in their wanderings in the wilderness or the field in quest of their daily subsistence!—each pursues his course undisturbed by his neighbour, and there is a social harmony in the herd or the flock, which it would be well for a nobler being to imitate. This harmony is, however, sometimes broken; but the quarrels which arise, have not for their object the exclusion of the weak and the old from the pastures of the common herd, but they have their origin in the passions of love, jealousy, or revenge, which, either in animal or human nature, disturb the social system.

A proverb or simile, current in the English language, would appear to make an exception to this disposition to "live and let live," of an animal that has been expressively denominated the companion of man. Can it be possible that evil communications have corrupted the faithful creature, or that its name has been used to carry off from its

* Paley.

must have descended from the few pairs that flew out of the ark; and so on with all other animals.

But, man steps forward, and asserts his sway—the wild beasts flee from his approach, and retire farther into the wilderness, and, in the course of time, perish from the land: a wolf in a state of nature is not now to be found on the British islands. The tameable, or domestic animals, would have shared the same fate with the wild ones, had it not been for their usefulness. The horse is caught by the human biped—is tamed through food—a bridle is put into his mouth—and the proudest of all animals bends his neck to the hand of man.

CHAP. II.

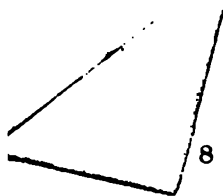
FOOD IS POWER.

ARISTOCRATIC DOMINION AND SACERDOTAL INFLUENCE REST ENTIRELY OR PARTLY, ON THE CONTROL OF THE SUBSISTENCE OF THEIR VASSALS AND VOTARIES.

MAN is endowed with higher powers, for good or evil, than the animals born only to consume the fruits of the earth, and, in his social state, has, through the bad part of his nature, in all his career, striven to acquire, maintain, and extend his power over the fellows of his own race. Man subdues and rules his fellow-man through the mouth, like the horse. The idiom of language confirms this idea, as we say "to curb a people or a nation," and "to bridle an ambitious man." History is to be blamed, if, in the course of these observations, man should appear too much in the character either of the enslaved or the enslaver.

The soil is the source whence food, and everything that conduces to the enjoyment of life, is derived; and, in the occupation of the earth's surface, there is a striking contrast between the struggles, the violence, and fraud of men, and the quiet migrations and settlements of the irrational animals.

Man knows that food is the immediate and continued necessity of his nature, and by securing to himself the source of an abundant supply, he augments his own enjoyments,



and possesses the means of controlling other men destitute of similar advantages. One man who can withhold, for forty-eight hours, the food of another man, or of a thousand or a million of men, retains the one man or the million under his subjection. This is the grand secret of society as unfolded in history down through the long period of six thousand years. Man controls his fellow-man by restraining or keeping back his subsistence.* On this principle is founded power of every kind—military despotism, oligarchical dominion, and, to a great degree, sacerdotal influence over the bodies and minds of men. On it, Nimrod established the first great empire on earth, and in the present day it is developed to a fearful extent, in the usurpation of the British aristocratic power over the subsistence and the industry of a great nation. It is not easily detected on reading the florid pages of general or national history. In early ages, poets were generally the historians or annalists of their times; and they were either not aware of the moving springs of action in men, or they followed the

* At the outstart it may be proper to meet an objection which appears to rest on the definition and description of Power given here. It may perhaps be said, that the definition will apply to the authority of a parent over his children, or to that of a master over his domestic servants, as well as to the power of a government over its subjects. Unnatural parents and cruel masters may go great lengths to starve their children and dependents but all these classes are themselves subject to the supreme authority of the government, and the laws regulate the connection between them. The natural relation between parent and child does not supersede the civil law and the connection between master and servant is a contract, which the latter can compel the former to fulfil. In a country there are many masters and the servant if not pleased with one can remove to another; but within the same boundaries there cannot exist contemporaneously two governments executing one law.

A government will not brook a rival: a country is in a state of revolution or anarchy, when two powers claim the control of the subsistence of its inhabitants.

bent of their own genius in describing the picturesque and romantic incidents of wars and revolutions. Regular historians are commonly the companions or the protégés of the men possessed of power, and their narrations are rather the accounts of the actions of their patrons, than statements of the effects of those actions on the great mass of the people among whom they take place. History is almost exclusively filled with the lives and doings of princes—the changes of dynasties—and the proceedings of warriors; but these are descriptions of the parties who hold in their hands the power over subsistence, or narratives of the struggles among a few men to gain possession of that power.

In barbarous ages, the lands or the means of subsistence of a people are invaded, and seized with open violence, by the invaders, who again are controlled in the division of the conquered territory by their own leaders. The irruption of the northern barbarians into the south of Europe, and the conquest and seizure of the lands of England by William the Conqueror, may be adduced as instances of unmitigated violence used in the control of subsistence.

In the seizure and occupation of the waste-lands, as practised in the modern system of colonization, we have the principle in full vigour. Throughout America, South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand, we behold a struggle going on among men to seize the soil and to prevent others from encroaching on it. The miserable native inhabitants are actually crushed, or extirpated, in the scramble of the new race of invaders; but a semblance of decency is preserved, by throwing down to the savages the smallest piece of money as the price of their lands, and when the seizure is completed, the invaders turn round to the fellows of their

own race, and demand for the same lands an enormous price for an acre.*

In modern times, the governments of civilized countries exercise their power over subsistence, by laws of restriction, prohibition, monopoly, and by TAXATION, in all its forms of insidious, indirect impost, and of direct personal payment or service. Salt is the savour of life,—without which the bodies of men would become living masses of worms and corruption. It has therefore been seized by the hand of fiscal power of every country as an article of taxation, and in some countries, it is held exclusively by the government. Throughout Asia, salt may be termed one of the instruments of despotism. In France, before its great revolution, salt was a government monopoly, and formed a productive source of its revenue; and, at present, the duties on salt appear considerable items in the national accounts of that country, and also of Spain.† It is only

* Question by Committee of House of Lords, April and May, 1838: N.B.
“ Lord Durham’s Company probably did not give for the million of acres more than forty or fifty pounds sterling? ”

Answer by the Hon. F. Baring—“ Probably not; they would give a certain number of muskets or blankets.”

Evidence of John Ward, Secretary to the New Zealand Company—given before Committee of House of Commons, 17th July, 1840:

“ Land secured, about twenty millions of acres. Cost about £17,000. The Company paid altogether £45,000 for land in different parts of New Zealand.” Answer, No. 645—“ The cost appears to be about a half-penny an acre.”

In the London newspapers of January, 1842, the Court of Directors of the New Zealand Company advertised their lands, on sale, at 30 shillings an acre!

† “ TAXES IN PRUSSIA.—The reduction of the taxes is estimated at 2,000,000 of Prussian dollars, of which 1,900,000 are to be allocated to diminish the price of salt, and so relieve the indigent classes.” Extract from *The Times* of Dec. 9, 1842.

twenty years since the taxes on salt in Great Britain were abolished; the duty was fifteen shillings a bushel, equal to about fifteen hundred per cent. on the prime cost of the article. But although this monstrous tax was abolished, that on bread was retained, and still exists in a Christian land!

Among the more energetic races of savages, the desire to appropriate the food of their enemies is carried to an extraordinary height. The ancient Scythians drank the blood of the first enemy they slew. Among the ancient nations of Central America, the bodies of prisoners taken in war were claimed by the officers or soldiers who captured them, and were dressed and served up at an entertainment of friends, who assembled after the prisoners had been first sacrificed to their gods. Savages believe, that by eating the bodies, they acquire the courage and other martial virtues of their enemies. So strong is the digestion, and so fell the revenge, of the New Zealanders, that they cook the bodies of their enemies, and serve them at the feast made to celebrate the victory. In ancient times, and perhaps in the present day, in Eastern countries, the delivery of earth and water was the symbol or token of submission of one people to another; the elements of earth and water represented the subsistence of the people who came under the yoke.

Despotism and famine are allied, or rather they are cause and effect. The despotism throughout Asia is terrible, and, comparing the present with the past, appears destined to be perpetual, in the countries where the inhabitants are fixed to the soil; but in the pastoral regions of Arabia, Persia, and Tartary, there exists a wild personal independence. It would be foreign to the design of this work, to enter into a disquisition on the state of the various races

that people Asia, and it will be sufficient merely to allude to one cause of the stern despotism, that grinds to the earth a nation of slaves. In the agricultural districts the soil perhaps is fertile, and under the sun, between the 30th and 45th degrees of north latitude, will produce every article of food required for the comfort and pleasure of man; and, provided there be sufficient moisture, in such abundance as would soon enable every man to obtain his subsistence, independent of the efforts of power. But, unfortunately, in those regions, from some meteorological causes, there occur periodically long and severe droughts, during which the earth yields no fruits; and from the days of Abraham and of Joseph, the inhabitants have alternated between devastations of famine, and the pressure of the most cruel despotism. In those times of physical calamity, the unhappy people must either perish of hunger, or be dependent for a precarious existence on the bounty of government. The inhabitants thus become debtors and slaves, and hence one of the sources of the misery in those countries. There has been only one Joseph in the whole history of mankind, and he was raised by the Almighty to be the preserver and benefactor of many nations

The present state of Egypt, Syria, Arabia, and the countries farther to the eastward, is familiarly known to every reader of travels. The accounts of all travellers agree in describing a wretched state of society there; and, thanks to steam, a view of Eastern despotism can now be taken in its strongest hold; but, before the era of steam, many enterprising and enlightened travellers explored the East, and at great personal risk, communicated to Europe much information concerning the countries they visited. Burckhardt, in his account of Arabia, gives some particulars which elucidate the system of Eastern taxation of food, leading to an

oppression of the most terrible nature ; he simply described the state of matters as they existed when he was in Arabia, without a view to the support of any system of political economy ; and, as he wrote in the year 1814, he is perfectly innocent of any intentional allusion to the British system of taxation of food. He says : “ The corn-trade was formerly in the hands of individuals, and the Sherif Ghalib also speculated in it ; but at present (1814) Mohammed Ali Pasha has taken it entirely into his own hands, and none is sold either at Suez or Cossier to private persons—every grain being shipped on account of the Pasha. This is likewise the case with all other provisions, as rice, butter, biscuits, and onions, of which large quantities are imported. At the time of my residence in Hedjaz, this country not producing a sufficiency, the Pasha sold the grain at Djiddah for the price of from 130 to 160 piastres per ‘ardeb,’ and every other provision in proportion : the corn cost him 12 piastres by the ardeb in Upper Egypt, and including the expense of carriage from Guana to Cossier, and freight thence to Djiddah, 25 to 30 piastres. This enormous profit was alone sufficient to defray his expenses in carrying on the Wahaby war ; but it was ill-calculated to conciliate the good will of the people. His partisans, however, excused him, by alleging that *in keeping grain at high prices, he secured the Bedouins of the Hedjaz in his interest, as they depend upon Mecca and Djiddah for provisions, and they were thus compelled to enter into his service, and receive his pay, to ESCAPE STARVATION.*”

Coffee is an absolute necessary of life in all Eastern countries, and is indeed the principal food of the inhabitants, in Arabia ; “ the poorest labourer never takes less than three or four cups a day : ”—but the Pasha of Egypt strictly prohibited the importation of West India Coffee

into his dominions, and no doubt justified such a law on the necessity to give protection to "*native-grown coffee*," meaning coffee from his own lands. He thus secured a monopoly, and a monopolist's price, for the three or four cups of coffee consumed by his poorest labourers. We have thus laid bare by Burckhardt, the principle on which Eastern despotism is based—the principle of the English corn-laws is precisely similar;—and we have thus the Arab of the Hedjaz, and the cotton-spinner of Manchester, compelled to buy grain at high prices *to escape starvation*.

Of all the fortified sea-ports on the globe, Acre on the coast of Syria, has been perhaps the most celebrated, both in ancient and modern times. Before the invasion of the Israelites, it was a place of great importance, and continued so through all the vicissitudes of history down to the termination of the Crusades. It was the last place held out by the Christians, the remnant of whom perished heroically in the defence of it. In the present century, twice has the British name been distinguished there; once by its successful defence against the conqueror of Europe, and again by its surrender to the British fleet anchored under its formidable batteries. The secret of this importance is explained by an impartial modern traveller in these words: "Acre, being the port by which all the rice, the staple food of the people, enters the country, the possessor of that place can produce a famine through the whole land."*

Several definitions have been given of the word Power:—it has been said, that "knowledge is power," and that "money is power." Knowledge may be termed moral power, and money may be denominated physical power. But if money, or capital, be considered as power, and analyzed, it will be

* Illustrations of the Holy Land, by F. Arundale, 1837, page 106.

found to reduce itself into subsistence or food—for, as money is the universal representative of property, it can draw to itself, by exchange, the food of man, and thereby give to the possessor an effective hold of life itself. No other substance will impart such strength, and therefore Food is Power.

The exercise of power, or the influence of government—that is to say, the effect of the authority of one or of a small number of persons over a multitude, and even over an entire people, is one of the most singular things in the moral nature of man. We are so habituated to the effect, that we lose sight of its singularity, and in enlightened societies the laws are obeyed on conviction of their necessity, and from a sense of duty, independent of the dread of punishment for disobedience of them. But the great mass of mankind submit to be ruled under a species of fascination, analogous to an optical illusion. Each individual of the community thinks he perceives the eye of the executive magistrate, as embodying the law, directed towards himself, and, as he is conscious of his perfect insignificance, when compared with the elevation and imposing front of the public authority, he bends submissive. A crowd of a hundred or more men, perhaps all stout and resolute individuals, will be kept at bay, or even made to run off, by one man with a loaded musket directed towards them: one minute for reflection, and another for concert, would suffice to overpower the armed man; but in the panic, each one imagines that the musket is pointed at him, and does not consider that he is only one of a hundred, and therefore the chance is ninety-nine to one that he will not be hit. A practised orator, in a large assembly, will so turn his face as to make each of his auditors fancy that his eye is more particularly directed towards him: in this case the self-love of the hearer is

gratified with the thought that so much eloquence should be uttered for his special instruction and delight. These two illustrations will serve to give some idea of the operation and effect of the power of government on the mind and conduct of the governed. But on the other hand, the steady eye of a people fixed upon the holders of the power of the state, has a wonderful effect. A people have only to agree among themselves what will be for their advantage, and be united in their demands, and the very expression of their looks is quite sufficient. There was no mistaking the meaning expressed in the eye of the British people, in the year 1832. It made the hand of power tremble, and the consequence was the concession to the national demand of a more direct control over the measures of government.

As it is maintained, that the control of subsistence constitutes political power, it follows that the glare of a famished people must be terrible to the possessors of that power. This being admitted, it will be for the interest of governments, and all bodies possessed of power, to shape their measures, so that the great mass of the community shall not feel in their personal circumstances, the immediate pressure of the power that rules them. There is a short-sightedness in a too selfish principle of government, which defeats its own object. There is an inquietude in the perseverance in acts of injustice, which has always been distressing and dangerous to government. Governments are composed of men, and must be appealed to through the feelings of men, and state maxims and courtly influence must in the long-run give way to humanity. With governments as with individuals, justice, as well as honesty, ought to be the best policy.

In the observations which follow, deduced from various historical instances, an attempt is made to support the

position, that political power, whether exercised by a monarch or an oligarchy, and sacerdotal influence, are founded on a control of the subsistence of the vassals, and votaries.

When the Israelites first demanded to have a king to rule over them, the consequences were plainly told,—“And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your oliveyards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants. He will take the tenth of your sheep; and ye shall be his servants.” It would appear that bread, as a symbol of regal power, was put into the hand of Saul, the first king of the Jewish nation—for after Samuel had anointed him king, under the direction of God, he instructed him to proceed to his government, and on the way he would meet three men, who, said the prophet, “will salute thee, and give thee two loaves of bread, which thou shalt receive of their hands.”*

About this time, however, they did require a king, “to go before them, and fight their battles.” Never were a people so sunk in slavery, as the Jews were at this period of their history: their very existence was at the mercy of their enemies the Philistines. “Now, there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel, for the Philistines said, Lest the Hebrews make them swords or spears; but all the Israelites went down to the Philistines, to sharpen every man his spear, and his coulter, and his axe, and his mattock.” “So it came to pass, in the day of battle, that there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people that were with Saul and Jonathan; but with Saul, and with Jonathan his son, was there found.” It would appear from this account, that the despotism under which they groaned was of the severest nature, for they were not only deprived of arms, but every mouthful of their food was under the control of their tyrants, who would allow only on

* 1 Samuel.

sufferance their agricultural instruments to be sharpened or repaired. In the Roman history, shortly after the expulsion of Tarquin, there occurs a parallel remarkably similar to this state of the Jews,—“The treaty with Porsenna prohibited the Romans from all use whatever of iron except in agriculture.”*

The Jews were indeed in a miserable plight: they were first exposed to priestly extortions—they were ground down by their enemies the Philistines—and in order to get out of their embarrassments, they submitted to a king, who took “their daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers.” The following is a graphic account of sacerdotal proceedings some years previous to the election of Saul to the throne of Israel:—“And the priest’s custom with the people was, that, when any man offered sacrifice, the priest’s servant came, while the flesh was in seething, with a fleshhook of three teeth in his hand; and he struck it into the pan, or kettle, or caldron, or pot; all that the fleshhook brought up, the priest took for himself. So they did in Shiloh, unto all the Israelites that came thither. Also, before they burnt the fat, the priest’s servant came, and said to the man that sacrificed, Give flesh to roast for the priest; for he will not have sodden flesh of thee, but raw. And if any man said unto him, Let them not fail to burn the fat presently, and then take as much as thy soul desireth; then he would answer him, Nay; but thou shalt give it me now;—and if not, I will take it by force.”† Three thousand years have elapsed, since the case of rapacity described above, and during that long period, the weakness and credulity of mankind have been but too frequently imposed upon by the demand—“but thou shalt give it me now, and if not I will take it by force.” At times,

* Niebuhr’s Rome.

† 1 Samuel.

the people have been so abased, and priestly dominion in union with secular power has been so great, that multitudes “ have come and crouched to it for a piece of silver and a morsel of bread, and have said—Put me, I pray thee, into one of the priests’ offices, that I may eat a piece of bread.”*

The history of every ancient people will furnish examples of conquest over the means of subsistence, and of the establishment of despotic power.

After a war of twenty years between Sparta and Messene, in Greece, the latter was brought under complete subjection. No direct tribute was imposed by Sparta, on the conquered people, but the terms demanded of them were, that one-half of the corn raised by the Messenians should be carried to the Spartan market; and, by way of homage, the Messenian men and women were bound to attend in mourning the funerals of Spartan kings, and chief citizens. At first, the Spartans treated the conquered people with lenity, but, as soon as they got their necks completely under the yoke by having secured their food, they began to insult them, and became insolent and overbearing, imposed heavy taxes on them, and gave over the unhappy Messenians to the avarice of the collectors, who committed the greatest outrages. Unmitigated tyranny was exercised; but at length, in this state of misery, a deliverer appeared. Aristomenes whispered to his degraded countrymen, and roused them to vengeance, and, after the first successes over the Spartans, was saluted king by his excited and grateful compatriots.

After a series of successes and defeats, Aristomenes was shut up with the remains of his army in fort Ira, where he was besieged for eleven years. He sallied out, was routed, and after many extraordinary escapes from destruction, he again

* 1 Samuel.

appeared in arms against his enemies, who, in superior force, overpowered him and the remnant of his gallant band. The leader, and the last of his followers, were thrown into a deep and dark cavern, there to perish miserably of broken bones and hunger.—All, except Aristomenes, died.

A fox entered the den, to feed on the dead bodies lying partly on and around the courageous chief, who seized the hind leg of the animal as it was moving off, and by keeping hold of it, as it tried to escape, he discovered the hole by which it had entered the cavern, and again found himself freed from darkness and death. He repaired to where the last of his countrymen and countrywomen held out, besieged by the Spartans, and at length had the glory to deliver them, and lead them safely out of reach of the enemy. This finished the second Messenian war.

There are two states of society of a very opposite nature, which have always been favourable to personal and political liberty : the first is the pure pastoral state—and the second, the artificial and refined condition of a commercial people. Each preserves its freedom and independence by the command which it retains over its means of subsistence. It has always been found impossible by any foreign power to control the food of a pastoral race of people : the sheep, the cattle, the goats, and camels, which afford the means of living, are moveable, and can be led into the glens of the mountains, or the recesses of the desert, on the first approach of an enemy. The owners, with their swords and spears, hover around and bid defiance to the best appointed armies, led on by the most celebrated warriors. The answer made by the Scythian to Darius, on his invasion of Scythia, explains the tactics of pastoral tribes. “It is not my disposition, O Persian ! to fly from

any man through fear : neither do I now fly from you. My present conduct differs not at all from that which I pursue in a state of peace. Why I do not contend with you in the open field, I will explain : we have no inhabited towns nor cultivated lands, of which we can fear your invasion or your plunder, and have therefore no occasion to engage with you precipitately : but we have the sepulchres of our fathers ; these you may discover, and if you endeavour to injure them, you shall soon know how far we are able or willing to resist you ; till then, we will not meet you in battle. Remember farther, that I acknowledge no master or superior but Jupiter. Instead of the presents which you require of earth and water, I will send you such as you deserve ; and in return for your calling yourself my master, I only bid you weep.”*

The pastoral Arabians have preserved an indomitable independence since the days of Ishmael. All the power of France has not been able in twelve years to penetrate beyond a few miles into the African pastoral regions.—And it is to be feared that the treacherous Affghans will escape the vengeance of Britain by simply putting themselves and flocks out of reach of her arms : we cannot touch their food.

But though pastoral tribes and nations are unconquerable by civilized people, they have themselves been the subduers of more enlightened but more enervated races. The ancient Tartars overran and conquered the greater part of southern and eastern Asia ; the Turkomans, Western Asia ; and the Saracen Arabs, a great part of the north of Africa, and the south of Europe. The movements of such people are armed migrations of nations carrying their food in the shape of live cattle, and seizing as they proceed the subsistence of the conquered people.

* Beloe's Herodotus.

A people under an enlightened commercial system enjoy a great degree of civil and political liberty; hence the jealousy entertained of that state by aristocratic and despotic power. The intelligence, activity, and union of a commercial people are formidable to power; their connections with foreign countries, their ships, their harbours, and storehouses, enable them to supply their wants, and to place their supplies out of reach of danger: they possess a complete command over their own subsistence, and, consequently, are independent. But the commercial principle is apt to degenerate into monopoly; and in some of the Italian states, oligarchies of the most tyrannical and inquisitorial character were seen to spring out of it. The Hanseatic league of towns, in the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries, forms a memorable instance of how far commerce could be carried, not only to establish the independence of a people, but to become formidable to the most powerful governments of Europe. In the Spanish war, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, Sir Francis Drake found in the river Tagus sixty ships loaded for the Hanseatic towns, with corn, which he took out as contraband, and thus made a blow at the league by controlling its food. Other European governments took umbrage at it, and at length, from about eighty cities, the league was reduced to four, and in the present day is entirely dissolved, as each city that formerly belonged to it now acts on its own account, and forms treaties with foreign governments.

Landed Aristocracies sneer at the wealth and greatness derived from commerce, and point with exultation to the fishing-rock of modern Tyre, to the slime that mantles on the canals of Venice, or to the ruins of commercial depôts spread over the earth, as standing monuments of the unstable nature of property thus acquired. But, on the other side,

turn the eye to the most favoured spots of the regions yet of primeval fertility of soil; and behold? The alluvial plains of the Euphrates, Tigris, once covered with a thousand cities, are haunts of a few wretched tribes of plundering Arabs! Nile still pours its perennial flood over a valley covered with ruins, to which the miserable slaves who crawl among them, look up as the work of magicians. The fertile plains once seized by the proud Roman patricians, are now converted into marshes, whence exhale pestilence and death.

These remarks will serve to convey the great truths, that laws founded on principles to support a small portion of the inhabitants of the country at the expense of the rest, eventually lead to the ruin of all classes—and that institutions and governments resting on just principles, for the general welfare of a people, will become as durable as the ground which sustains every thing, whether within the walls of Hamburgh, or on the soil of Egypt.

This is the proper place to observe, that in all systems of religion, except in the religion of Christ, the prohibition or restriction of articles of food has been one great means of their support. Moses was zoologically precise in his description of beasts, fishes, and birds, which were to be eaten, or to be avoided, as food. Several reasons have been assigned for the great care bestowed on this section of his laws—the chief of which, no doubt, was, to mark the Jews as a people distinguished from all others; and another, to hold up the absurd and contemptible nature of the idolatry of the Egyptians and other nations, by being enjoined to eat the very animals that were actually worshipped as gods by those people. Christianity being a pure faith, addressed to man as a moral and intellectual being, is independent of all such extraneous aids: it offers

perfect freedom, and we are told that "whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience' sake : for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof."*

In the corrupt state of Christianity during the dark ages, the church almost starved its votaries into faith, and, in proportion to the degree of fanaticism was the strictness of abstinence from food.† During the wars of the crusades, the fasts were observed by the Christians with such superstitious rigour, "that children at the breast were not allowed the usual nourishment, and the herds of cattle were driven from their pastures."‡

In the middle of the fifteenth century, the Pope prohibited Christians and Jews from eating together; which is similar to the policy prescribed by Pharaoh, who prohibited the Egyptians from eating bread with the Hebrews.§

When the Scots, in the time of Cromwell, refused to keep fasts by order of the civil magistrate, there was a meaning in the refusal much deeper than the circumstance appeared to indicate.

Among a rude and unenlightened people, the founders and maintainers of idolatrous worship, with a deep knowledge of human nature, excited the fears and hopes of their ignorant countrymen, and builded thereon a system of spiritual despotism and temporal power. The tricks by which they imposed on the senses of the credulous devotees, inspiring them with superstitious awe, have been discovered by travellers on examining the ruins of ancient temples.

* 1 Cor. x. 25.

† It was asked by the Jews, of the Author of Christianity, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not?" Matthew ix. 14.

‡ Mill's History of the Crusades.

§ Genesis xliii. 32.

The influence of the priesthood of ancient Egypt must have been overpowering both on the government and the people, as their lands were exempted from the tax imposed as redemption after the great famine.

Among the various causes which contributed to the support, for so many ages, of the priestly dominion of ancient Egypt and Rome,—superstitions so terrible—may be ranked the agrarian influence acquired by the priests and augurs, in their capacity as sacred land-surveyors and measurers.

It is commonly believed that in Egypt the art of surveying and dividing lands was first perfected in order to adjust the boundaries of property after the annual overflowing of the Nile; and as the priests were the possessors of all the knowledge extant, they naturally were referred to as arbiters in disputed cases of limits. The ancient Etruscan system, from which the Romans took their principles of land-surveying, was, no doubt, borrowed from the Egyptians.

The limits fixed to fields and estates were considered sacred, and never to be altered; hence the worship of the god Terminus who presided over bounds, and hence those picturesque solemnities of crowning with flowers and garlands the stones which marked the divisions of lands. The very word "Temple," in its original meaning, was connected with the process of observation taken from the cardinal points of the heavens, in tracing the boundaries of lands. "Thus every assignment of lands, and even every sale of domain lands, acquired a religious security: it never could be resumed by the state."* The power and influence of the priesthood were thus connected with pro-

* Niebuhr's Rome.

perty in lands, the source of subsistence—hence the extent and durability of the priestly dominion.

The Druidical system of ancient Britain, the priesthood of Brahma in India, the systems of Mexican and Peruvian idolatry, the reign of superstition in ancient Greece, and, above all, the desolating influence of Mahommedanism, have astonished the world by their monstrous power.

As the Brahminical and Mahommedan religions still exist, and flourish in vigour in the present day, and as they extend their influence over countries, either under the dominion of Great Britain, or with which she has important diplomatic and commercial relations, it will be well to advert to the restriction or control of food exercised by those systems. It would appear that Brahma and Mahommed, the founders, wished to perpetuate their dominion over the minds by an effectual hold of the bodies of their followers. Besides a prohibition of certain kinds of food, frequent and severe fasts are enjoined on the votaries. Among the Brahmins no flesh is eaten, or blood shed: the cow, as among the ancient Egyptians, is deemed sacred; and milk, the produce of the venerated animal, is the most esteemed food. No bullock is suffered to be worked, if hungry or thirsty. Rice and vegetables are the only food allowed, along with ghee or butter. Some kinds of flesh and fish are permitted, but it is considered virtuous to abstain from them. Devotees may eat only once a day, and that sparingly, of rice. Their bigotry in their rules of eating is extraordinary; the division into castes preserves the system, and pride comes in aid of fanaticism; the Brahmins, or highest caste, will not eat food prepared by an inferior caste, and so on with the different orders; no man will eat or drink with another man belonging to an inferior caste; and to such an absurd length has this superstition been

carried, that in a case of shipwreck, Hindoos have preferred to perish of thirst, rather than use the water belonging to men of a lower grade. Charity and hospitality are, however, inculcated in the strongest manner, and these virtues distinguish the Indian character. A great singularity marks the religion of Brahma, and distinguishes it from all other systems: it seeks no proselytes, is tolerant, and believes that all religions are acceptable to God. It has existed two or three thousand years, and appears to rest its power on the control or proscription of food: it has impressed on the Indian character the features of passiveness, and, in all ages of its history, the inhabitants have succumbed to despotic power, generally of foreign origin.

On turning to Mahomedanism, we find a religion of quite an opposite character; it holds its votaries, in their food and drink, as firmly by the mouth, but allows greater variety, and does not prohibit animal food, except hog's flesh and several other articles out of the Mosaic list. It forms a striking contrast with Brahminism in its active and energetic character; it makes proselytes with the sword, and one of its duties is, to make war upon the infidels—that is to say, upon all people who are not of its creed: the principal duties inculcated are, to pray five times a day—to fast one month in the year—to visit Mecca once in a lifetime—to pay a tithe of property to the church—to drink no wine—and to eat no pork.

It thus appears, that by the control or proscription of food, superstition has raised its monstrous power throughout all Asia; and through the command and license of food must the same superstition be assailed and overturned; but not in choking the people by doing violence to their prejudices, but by gratifying their palates and gradually nourishing their bodies with the forbidden food.

It would require some tact, and learned management, to effect the change, but success need not be despaired of by a Government of India really actuated by a desire to improve the condition of the natives. Ridicule might be quietly brought in aid of the benevolent design; and it might be put to the common sense of this simple people, What have horned cattle to do with a creed? or, why should abstinence from hog's flesh be an article of faith?

The prejudices of a fanatical people respecting the religious prohibition of food, are strong, and must not be violently assailed. A political incendiary on one occasion tried to excite disturbances between the Mahommedan population and the British authorities in a town in India, by throwing a pig into a mosque, as if done by the English.

However, people have prejudices in favour of certain kinds of food. Every nation has its favourite dish; and in Spain, pork is almost universally used as a test to mark the true believer from the Moorish followers of Mahomet, and from the Jewish race. In Eastern countries, a species of homage is paid to the rank of an individual, or affection is displayed to his person, by a larger mess of food being placed before him at an entertainment.

The influence of diet on individual and national character has been remarked by writers on physiology, but to what extent this can be carried is not satisfactorily ascertained. It comes within every person's experience to ascertain the effects on himself of different kinds of food, and by a continuance of a certain regimen a permanent change may be produced in his system. Animal food is much more stimulating than vegetable diet, and according to the nature of the aliment, is supposed to be the disposition of the various races of men: but yet there are a thousand circumstances which work mysteriously in form-

ing the character of a people. The Scotchman on his oatmeal, the Irishman on his potato, and the Hindoo on his rice, is each a specimen of a vegetable-fed biped—but what a variety there is in the three characters! The popular belief in this country, during the war, was that one Englishman was a match for three Frenchmen in a bodily struggle, because the first ate his beef, and the other their frogs and their soup. To sum up; this may be said, that a well-fed British or Irish man, when in downright earnest in the cause which he adopts, is a very formidable character; and when the roast beef of England shall become a traditionary relic, the sceptre of power will have departed from her.

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CHAP. III.

ANALYSIS OF THE ROMAN HISTORY.

PART I.

THE ANTAGONIST PRINCIPLES OF ROMAN ARISTOCRACY AND DEMOCRACY.—
THE ARISTOCRACY CONTROLLED THE PEOPLE, BY CONTROLLING THEIR
MEANS OF SUBSISTENCE —THE PEOPLE REGAINED THEIR LIBERTIES AND
SECURED THEIR POWER BY RECOVERING POSSESSION OF THE PUBLIC
LANDS, AS THE SOURCE OF SUBSISTENCE.—MILITARY DESPOTISM CRUSHED
THE REPUBLIC.

THE history of the ancient Romans has been often referred to, as affording valuable lessons to modern nations. Many passages of it have been cited as examples for modern people to imitate. But considerable injury has been done to the cause of true liberty, by a partial or injudicious application of those passages. Several tragical incidents have been held out, and have excited the feelings of an ardent people with the desire, but without the preparation, for freedom. Many of the events alluded to, together with the energetic and extraordinary characters who were actors in them, are more adapted for the romance of the stage, than for the imitation or guidance of a sober people, in pursuit of a rational freedom. But, to the British people, the history of the Romans must ever be interesting, as exhibiting features similar to what their own story presents. Of all the ancient nations, the Romans had the reputation

of enjoying the greatest degree of civil and political liberty ; and the same with the British in modern times.

Each nation, in its own way, exercised considerable influence upon its government, but each was oppressed by an aristocratic power, that constantly endeavoured to crush the people under the burden of its exactions ; the Romans, after a struggle of five centuries, fell down, and were crushed by the imperial government ; the British people have been more fortunate, as they have been preserved from abasement, by the barrier of the throne standing between them and a faction, ever active and expert in the arts of corruption. At the end of a thousand years, under a regulated monarchy, the people are more powerful and intelligent than at any former period of their history ; and, in another generation, they will be able to extract the fangs from the jaws of the monster that has so long devoured their substance. In another light, the Romans cannot but be considered with interest, mixed with a degree of awe ; they conquered, and held in subjection for four hundred years, the British Islands, and our ancestors were consequently the vassals of that extraordinary people for that long period of time. A people that conquered the world, will always have a strong hold on the sympathies and admiration of future ages.

The people, or nation, entitled in history the Romans, were originally formed by the union of three races or tribes, on the western coast of Italy—the Latins, Sabines, and Etrurians. During the first two centuries and a half, their government was monarchical ; with a senate or council composed of the men whose age, wisdom, or valour gave them authority with their countrymen ; the people themselves, in public assemblies, ratified or negatived the laws passed by the king and senate. In a small community, the

suffrages of every male adult could be easily taken ; and the fineness of the climate led the inhabitants to pass a great part of their time, both for amusement and business, in the open air. Climate possesses a powerful influence over the customs, laws, and institutions of a people.

The first king after Romulus was a blessing to the Romans. He united them, and established guilds or companies of trading burghers, which were the origin of the order of citizens ; but, at the same time, the patrician or aristocratic body cemented and extended its power. The last of the kings proved a tyrant and a curse, to both the citizens and patricians, and was expelled the country ; and the throne was overturned by the aristocratic party, in union with the people, who lent their assistance to a revolution which entirely changed the government.

A severe oligarchical power, under the name of a Republic, was established ; and the people found, that for one despot, they were pressed down by a number of tyrants. From the expulsion of Tarquin, in the 507th year before the birth of Christ, to the establishment of the Imperial power under Augustus, about the time of that event, the history of the Roman people presents an uninterrupted series of efforts, on the part of the aristocracy, to found and perpetuate their dominion, by the possession of a complete control over the subsistence of the people, and of the struggles of the people to free themselves from the intolerable yoke. The history of no other nation develops with such force the principle of political power and the control of subsistence being identical. Numa, two hundred years before the dethronement of Tarquin, had established the division of lands, gained in war, among the poorer part of the people ; and, previous to the expulsion of the tyrant, property was fixed as the basis of apportioning the taxes ;

and for that end, and for the great object of the franchise, the city of Rome was divided into four tribes or sections, and all the able bodied citizens were ranked in classes. On the valuation of the property of the classes depended the tribute, the military accoutrements, and the place assigned in the order of battle; the highest class of citizens were embodied into the cavalry. The order of knights, or the equestrian order, was entirely founded on a property-qualification; and even in the most flourishing time of the republic, it only required property to the amount of about £3,000, valued in modern sterling money, to qualify a citizen for the equestrian rank. The order of knights thus formed a monied body, between the people and the patricians, the hereditary aristocracy.

Very shortly after the banishment of Tarquin, the people found themselves exposed to the exactions of their new masters, and, in order to escape from them, abandoned the city, and retired to form another settlement. It was on this occasion that they were persuaded to come back, on hearing the application of the fable of the belly and the limbs of the body. But by this movement they gained the advantage of having certain officers, elected by themselves from their own body, to watch over and protect their interests, by possessing a veto on the proceedings of the senate. The people now made claims to property belonging to the public, but the patricians resisted them—resting their resistance on the *possession* of the property.

In consequence of the neglect of agriculture, caused by the disturbances, a severe famine ensued, and commissioners were sent to purchase corn of the neighbouring states. When a supply arrived, a dispute arose as to its distribution; the Senate claimed for itself the division of the grain, and Coriolanus, the stern and haughty leader of the aristo-

cratic party, proposed that it should be portioned to the people on no other condition than the surrender and abdication, on their parts, of the rights so lately conceded to them. It is to be observed, that the corn thus imported was purchased with the public money, and the people naturally became indignant at this attempt to cheat them, and to starve them; but their tribunes brought the author of it to trial, and sentenced him to banishment from the territory. He withdrew to the most powerful enemies of the Roman people, and lending them the aid of his military talents, roused them to invade the Roman territory, where this mean and traitorous aristocrat wreaked his vengeance, by laying waste the lands of his own countrymen. He, however, met the fate that he merited, for the Volscians, availing themselves of the treason, but despising the traitor, put the "insolent villain" to death.*

Immediately after this, began the struggles between the people and the aristocracy for the passing of the Agrarian laws, which continued to form the main features of Roman history to the end of the Republic. The question was simply to establish the right, which the people had to a share of the public lands acquired by conquest. In early times, one portion was devoted to the gods—another to the state—and a third to the citizens; but at the period referred to, the patrician order, on every extension of the Roman

* Shakspeare, who wrote for the people of every age, appeared to have had in his mind's eye the state of his own country in the year 1841-2, when he made the Roman citizens address the following observations to the Senators.—"Care for us! True, indeed! They ne'er cared for us yet. Suffer us to famish, and their storehouses crammed with grain—make edicts for usury to support usurers—repeal daily any wholesome act established against the rich—and provide more piercing statutes daily to chain up and restrain the poor! If the wars eat us not up, they will; and there is all the love they bear us."—*Coriolanus*, Act I. Scene I.

territory, swelled their own acquisitions, while allotments of land to the citizens were rarely and grudgingly made. It is true that colonies were established on the frontiers of conquered countries, in which the citizens were offered lands that cost them perhaps their lives to defend—while the patricians enjoyed in safety the greater portion reserved to themselves. But the people possessed an inherent energy that carried them onwards, and by the union of the several classes, they gained ground on the aristocratic order. At this epoch of their history, a remarkable person was called from his rural retirement to be invested with supreme authority. This was Cincinnatus—who left with reluctance his mattock and his plough, to assume the baton of power. He had to quell intestine commotion, and repel foreign invasion; he succeeded in both, and then retired to his farm. In times of imminent danger, the people can be ruined or saved only by one of themselves:—they are safe in their own union and confidence in each other—or they may be betrayed by some renegade from their ranks.

About this period, the people, by their intelligence, effected a great reform by the promulgation of a written body of laws, compiled into the celebrated Code of the Twelve Tables: but as a lesson to the Roman, and every other people, the ten men who had been appointed to form these laws, set themselves above all law, and usurped the most despotic powers over their countrymen, who at length were happy enough to get them expelled from Rome.

The patrician order had been so exclusive and haughty in their bearing to the great body of the people, that inter-marriages had been forbidden, but the citizens, through means of their tribunes, compelled the removal of this badge of inequality, and the law concerning marriages between

the popular and aristocratic orders was passed by the senate.

This change was in its consequences a great social and political revolution—the patricians were constrained to increased exertion in the public service, and the popular party were incited to imitate them; the latter practised frugality and industry, in order to rival the aristocrats in wealth. From this period commenced the advance of Rome to supreme power over Italy; for in war perfect union prevailed against the foreign enemy.

Tranquillity was disturbed by one Spurius Mælius, a wealthy knight, attempting to possess himself of sovereign power. During a famine he purchased all the corn that he could procure, and distributed it along with arms to the poorer classes. But his designs were discovered, and he himself was destroyed by an officer of the dictator Cincinnatus.

Fifty years after the event referred to, the Gauls under Brennus, tempted by the climate and fruits of Italy, invaded the country and sacked Rome, but were driven back and almost entirely destroyed by Camillus the Roman general, who roused the people to rebuild the city, laid waste by the barbarians. This invasion was effected by a surprise, and it put the Romans afterwards more upon their guard.

The struggles between the two great orders in the state, continued after the expulsion of the Gauls. The circumstance that gave peculiar weight to the influence exercised by the patrician body was the possession of the priestly office:—to political power was added the terrors of superstition over the minds of the people. The union of magistrate and priest was preserved to the time of the empire, and Julius Cæsar in his decrees began, “I Julius Cæsar,

imperator, and high priest, have made this decree with the approbation of the Senate.”*

The devastation of the country, and the destruction of the city of Rome, by the barbarians of Gaul, reduced the Roman people to great distress. Property was destroyed, and at this period of public calamity the rapacity and tyrannical proceedings of the aristocratic party appeared to increase with the misery of the people. Hatred, pride, and avarice leagued the patricians for mastery over the Roman citizens. The spirit of the people was sunk by the enormous weight of calamity, and it was verging into the gloom and stupor of despair.

The Roman people and the Roman name were about to be extinguished ; and in the present age, it is impossible for the mind of man to conceive what would now have been the state of the world, had the virtue and the energy of that extraordinary race not surmounted the difficulties of their situation, and enabled them to curb and depress the power of the aristocratic order.

But an intelligent people, true to themselves, who resolutely demand their rights of a domestic tyrant, or defend them against a foreign foe, need never despair ; and at this period of Roman history, two men arose, who raised their countrymen from a state of great abasement, to one of prosperity, power, and grandeur. These two men, Licinius

* Josephus—Book xiv. Chap. 10.

The Christian British union of “ Church and State,” is in principle analogous with the “ union of magistrate and priest,” among the Romans. Political power and theocratic influence are centered in the same individual. The holy ‘ Father in God,’ the bishop, sits as a lay legislator, to tax the subsistence of the citizens. The agricultural labourer, who poaches a hare, has his sentence passed on him by the same individual, who perhaps read on the Sunday before, in the parish church,—“The gleanings of thy harvest thou shalt leave them unto the poor and to the stranger.”

and Servius, were tribunes of the people, who, with great strength of purpose, ability, and unconquerable perseverance, and without violence, succeeded in getting a measure passed into law, which saved their country from ruin.— This law was the famous statute known as the Licinian Rogations. It decided three most important questions. First. It diminished the political power of the aristocratic party, and increased that of the people, by dividing the consular authority equally between consuls appointed from the Patricians and Plebeians. Secondly. It struck at the root of illegal and usurped power, by reclaiming for the republic, all lands which had been violently seized and occupied by individuals of the aristocratic order; and it restored to the Roman citizens the command of subsistence, by allotting them, according to circumstances, a portion of the public lands in possession, on payment of a land-tax, of the tenth bushel from arable lands, and a fifth of the produce from plantations and vineyards: the use of pasture lands was allowed at certain rates for every head of cattle, sheep, and other animals. A maximum of land was fixed, as no person was allowed to possess more of the public lands, than a section of about 350 acres of arable or plantation land, or to feed more than 100 head of black cattle, or 500 of small cattle, on the public pastures; those parts of the public lands, at the time of the passing of the law, in possession of individuals, exceeding 350 acres each, were to be assigned to the poorer citizens, in property, in lots of about four acres and a half each; it contained an important clause, binding the assignees of the public lands to employ freemen as labourers, in proportion to the extent of their possessions. This salutary regulation was, however, evaded by the patricians, and to such an extent did they introduce slaves, to the exclusion of the free population, that at a

future period the very existence of the nation was threatened by a general insurrection of the slaves, under the energetic command of Spartacus. The third question settled by the Licinian Rogations was, the adjustment of private debts, and the regulation of the rate of the interest of money.—Without an intimate acquaintance with the domestic state of the ancient Romans, it is impossible to form correct ideas of the nature of this section of the celebrated laws of Licinius: the object of the usury law was, to protect the debtor against the rapacity of the money-lender; and the portion of the law, which decided the time and mode of settling private debts, appeared to have been analogous with insolvent debtors' and bankrupt laws of modern commercial nations.

In order to form a correct estimate of the importance of the Licinian laws, and of the talent, courage, and perseverance, displayed by the authors of them, it is necessary to recapitulate the circumstances which conduced to the enormous power possessed at this time by the aristocratic party.

The political power of the patrician order was based and maintained on the subsistence of the great body of citizens: in this case, the control of subsistence constituted political and military power. The public domains, which consisted of lands, the property of the state, had been, ever since the expulsion of Tarquin, illegally seized by the aristocracy, and divided among themselves, to the exclusion of the bulk of the people. From that event to the Agrarian law of Licinius, a space of about 140 years, a continued struggle had been carried on by the people to recover their rights. The patricians not only usurped the possession of the public lands, but they very soon even evaded the payment of the land-tax, or rent, for the use of the lands so

occupied. But, while they threw the burden off themselves, they succeeded in imposing it, with all its weight, on the shoulders of the people, who were forced to pay the full extent of the tax on such lands as still belonged to them, and at the same time bear the other burdens of the state. There is a wonderful similarity in the nature and operations of the Roman patricians, to those of aristocracies of modern times. Pride and meanness, cruelty and rapacity, are the characteristics of both.

The unjust and unequal pressure on the citizens had reached its greatest height, after the invasion by the Gauls. The property-tax was continued to be exacted from them, even after the property which stood registered in the censor's books had ceased to exist. An attempt was made to force a new valuation, but this very reasonable proceeding was opposed by the dominant aristocratic order, whose cruelty and sordid disposition were displayed to infatuation towards their distressed countrymen, even when the public lands were in illegal possession of the order, without being subject to any taxes. The Roman laws affecting debtors were of the most severe character :—the debtor, who failed in his engagements, was handed over without mercy to the creditor, who might keep him in chains, or immure him in prison, or put him to death, or sell him as a slave beyond the boundary of the republic. Thousands of citizens thus fell into the hands of the aristocratic body, who seemed to derive delight in having bands of them kept in dungeons; and at this time, the cruelties exercised on the people called loudly for vengeance.

As the citizens of the different tribes were embodied and trained in arms, it would excite surprise that they did not redress their grievances at the sword's point, and crush at one blow their domestic enemies. But it must be borne

in mind, that the Roman people, as exhibited in the respective tribes, were lovers of order, and had great respect for the laws and institutions of their country; and as they reserved their arms for the enemies with whom they were almost always at war, they rather endured the rapacious proceedings of the aristocracy, than, by entering into civil broils, give an advantage to their foreign foes. They fought the constitutional battle with their domestic oppressors, by means of their tribunes, who acted as their attorneys in defending and prosecuting their interests.

But another motive checked them from proceeding to extremities with the patricians. These usurpers of the public lands cemented their political power by dispensing the food, which they tore from their fellow-citizens, to a class of men whom they maintained, as dependents, on the soil which in right belonged to every Roman. This class of the population was called the *clientela* of the patricians. The clients of the patrician families consisted, either of men excluded from the tribes, or of emancipated slaves; or they were citizens of some foreign state, who put themselves under the protection of a powerful family; or, in fine, they were composed of men whose debts placed them at the mercy of the patricians whom they chose for their patrons. They were allotted small tracts of lands, held at the will of patricians, and were entirely devoted to the interests of their respective patrons.

But, as they were bound as vassals to the lords, the latter on the other hand were obliged to protect their clients. In the early age of the Roman republic, the relation of the patricians to their clients, was analogous to the state of the Highland chieftains and the individuals of the clan. As the people, properly so called, increased in numbers and political influence, the clientry was augmented with a view to

overawe the citizens in the exercise of their privileges. The clients were employed at elections as mere tools of their aristocratic patrons. In this respect they acted a part very similar to the serf-like tenants, employed in the present day to vote at elections in England, in favour of the nominees of the men who control the subsistence of the unfortunate dependants without a will of their own.

One of the tritest observations that can be made, is, the sameness of human nature in all ages and countries; but it strikes one with astonishment, to find a practice prevailing in Rome, subsequent to the Licinian law, which appears so truly like an English custom in similar cases, in the middle of the nineteenth century: "It was usual for the citizens, in going up to give their votes, to pass between railings which fenced them off from the multitude without. The aristocrats had made use of this circumstance, by causing the space between the rails to be made sufficiently wide for their partisans and dependants to stand ranged in the inside, in order to ply the voters with solicitations or menaces. The Marian law of suffrages limited this space, so that only the voters should have room to pass."* The clients or partisans of the patricians could be mustered in very formidable bodies. Some of the most powerful families could bring to Rome four to five thousand men entirely devoted to their interests.

These particulars will serve to convey an idea of the power of the Roman tribes of citizens under the active and courageous conduct of C. Licinius Stolo and L. Sextius, the authors of the regeneration of Rome, against an influence so strong as that of the aristocracy; but the people rallied round their leaders, and were resolved to brave a civil war, if provoked by the patricians.

* Lardner's *History of Rome*.

The Licinian laws were passed in the year of Rome 387, or in the 366th year before the Christian era. In their effect on the character and condition of the Roman people, and in their general results, there are few events in the whole history of mankind so important as these laws.

The treaty of Magna Charta was of vast importance to the English people, as it not only ameliorated the condition of the generation existing at the passing of that law, but it has served as the basis of the liberty of the nation, during a period of upwards of six centuries of years: but to the Romans, the Licinian laws were not only the guarantee for their civil and political freedom, but they actually restored to the citizens the usufruct of the soil, of which they had been deprived by the dominant faction in the country. In the case of the Romans, it was the people pulling out of the grasp of the aristocracy, property of which they had been plundered; and compelling the same aristocracy to divide with the people the possession of the national power. In the case of the English, it was merely the aristocracy forcing a stupid, unprincipled, and cowardly monarch to yield to conditions which were so framed, as to secure the suffrages of the bulk of the citizens, whose condition would be improved by the measure. The unfortunate Saxon race were too much abased, and the means of their subsistence too strongly in the clutches of their oppressors, even to remonstrate against the Norman possessors of their lands. From the time of the seizure of the lands by William the Conqueror, by his introduction of the feudal law, to the date of the signature of the great charter, a period of 145 years had elapsed; and from the expulsion of the Roman king, when the patricians seized the public lands, to the passing of the Agrarian laws of Licinius, the time was 143 years.

But, in their consequences, there was an overwhelming importance in these Roman laws of the division of property, which scarcely belongs to any other laws,—for they really decided the fate of the world. The Roman people started at once into vigour, and took the first step in the march which led them to the conquest of the then known globe. The citizens, being secured in the possession of the means of subsistence for themselves and families from the lands assigned to them, and after settling arrangements for cultivation, dedicated themselves to the defence, and to the aggrandizement of their country.

They were first called to repel the Gauls, those fierce barbarians who were now making vigorous exertions to locate themselves in the fertile districts of Italy. The Romans either destroyed them, or drove them to find refuge in other regions. They afterwards entered with energy into the wars with the nations that surrounded their territories; and, subduing one after another, found, at the end of about seventy years from the passing of the Agrarian law, the whole of Italy under their rule. Military ardour and emulation in battle animated the citizens, from the moment that “every one could aspire to attain his fitting place and recompense.” All ranks and military honours were open, and attainable by the meritorious: the common soldier might rise to be a general before the conclusion of a campaign, and ambition thus led to noble actions and patriotic sacrifices. For the space of two hundred years after the Agrarian laws were enacted, most of the great exploits which have immortalized the Roman name were performed by men sprung from the body of the people.

By valour and superior discipline, the Romans subdued the various nations around them, and they retained their dominion by a policy, which marked their wisdom as mili-

tary colonizers of the countries thus brought under their rule : a third of the lands was reserved for assignment to Roman settlers on the conquered territories ; and by a plan of citizenship, the old inhabitants were brought to identify themselves with their new masters. One state which had for several centuries been a peaceable neighbour, at length incurred the resentment, and brought down the vengeance, of Rome, by its requiring the surrender of one-half of the lands of the conquered people.

Although this system of aggrandisement of a people, by foreign conquest, is condemned by public opinion in modern times, and in fact would not be permitted among civilized nations, still we cannot but admire, and may even applaud, the course pursued by the ancient Romans. In those early ages, wars were the business and almost the recreation of men ; and as communities or nations consisted of tribes living without much of the artificial refinements of society, military operations of an offensive or defensive nature could be carried on, without great derangement to the social system ; in fine, war might almost be termed the natural state of such communities. The calm of peace, in ancient times, was oftener the slumbering torpor of a people under the pressure of despotism, than the quiet enjoyment of the blessings arising from freedom from violent disturbance. The Romans only followed the course which the circumstances of the times forced upon them ; and the valour, discipline, and wisdom displayed by them in extending and sustaining the power which victory afforded them, have been, and will be, the subjects of admiration in all ages. Indeed the very existence of the present great European nations, may be said to be derived from the Roman stock of empire ; but wars, which indirectly led to this state of matters, are not now necessary for its perma-

nency. The affairs of society have become complicated, and are of a too artificial nature to bear, without great detriment, the violent operations of war. Considering ancient wars as the means of having spread indirectly civilization over the nations of the world, commerce, in modern times, accomplishes, or ought to accomplish, in human affairs, all that wars formerly achieved.

But the Romans, as they extended their conquests and cemented their power, became intoxicated with victory, and corrupted by the spoils of war. A sudden influx of wealth was accompanied with its usual effects on the habits and manners of the people; but one of the most demoralizing circumstances of this system of warfare, was to be found in the extraordinary increase of captives, who, by the laws of war in those ages, became slaves for life to the conquerors. In the latter age of the republic, about 150,000 slaves were made in one war, and distributed through Italy. The liberties of the Roman citizens were gradually giving way under such a system, and the power and corruption of the aristocratic order, increased by the extension of territory, and by the plunder of the conquered people. A strife commenced between the old patricians and the burghers, on account of the former becoming richer and richer by war, and the administration of public offices, while the people became poorer and poorer by military service. The Agrarian laws of Licinius had become a dead letter, and, at the end of the second century from their enactment, the immense tracts of land acquired by the military services of the people, were a prey to the rapacity of the patricians.

The usurped possession of the public lands, at a time when the population had so greatly increased, enabled the aristocratic order effectually to command the food of the

citizens; and exorbitant wealth, in the shape of gold and silver, afforded the means of bribery and corruption.

The people were rapidly sinking under this tyrannical power, when two extraordinary men, brothers, appeared, and made noble efforts to save their unhappy countrymen from ruin. The state of the country at this period was really dreadful,—for the people were not only deprived of their share of the public domains, but the aristocratic usurpers of the lands actually employed slaves for their cultivation, and turned off the free population. To increase the miseries of the people, oppressive war-taxes weighed down the middle and poorer classes, who were obliged to sell their little patrimonial farms, to raise funds to satisfy the rapacious demands of the dominant faction, whose wealth enabled them to buy up the property thus offered for sale. The object of the Gracchi, was to restore the public lands to the people, and to renew the Agrarian laws of Licinius, but, as was to be expected, they met with the most vehement opposition from the senate, who were the possessors, or rather plunderers, of the public property.

But, even in this time of patrician power and corruption, the constitutional forms were observed by the Gracchi, in their efforts to obtain justice for the people; but these legal forms were set at nought by the insolence of the aristocratic faction, for “even when Tiberius Gracchus had at length carried his point of getting his rogation read to the people, and had proceeded to erect booths for the voters, and caused the balloting boxes to be placed in readiness, these boxes or urns, in which the votes were deposited, were removed by force by the partisans of the senatorial faction.”*

At length this brave and patriotic man fell a victim to senatorial vengeance, which was also wreaked on the

* Lardner's History.

defenceless multitude, waiting to learn the issue of the business. Many thousand citizens were on this occasion massacred by a numerous band of slaves and clients, led on by the consul himself.

The cruelty of the conquering party bred the bitterest enmity between the aristocracy and the people, and from this time political struggles of parties sank into the unnatural contest between the rich and the poor. This was shown in the most terrible civil wars that ever convulsed a country. The people throughout the Italian states, almost rose in mass to demand a redress of grievances, and, in twenty years afterwards, the slave population, under the command of the celebrated Spartacus, flew to arms, and carried consternation even to Rome itself. The first was called the Social war, and the second the Servile war. On the breaking out of the Social war, it was proposed to "win the poorer class of citizens, by allotments of land, and the wholly indigent by distribution of corn."

The aristocracy, who pushed aside the free population to supply their place with slaves, and who ruled both with a rod of iron, were properly considered the authors of the Servile war. Sylla the dictator declared to his army, "*that might prevailed over right at Rome*, and that he contemplated the bestowing, through the extirpation of one generation, a wholly new constitution on another." However, death prevented this monster from effecting his fell design; but previous to his death he had become satiated with blood; and, disgusted with his own cruelty, he abdicated the seat of power, at a time when all men thought him fixed in it beyond the chance of removal. From this event, the affairs of the Roman people rushed to a crisis, and from it commenced that terrible struggle among a few of the most powerful men, for the empire of Rome, and, through it,

of the world, and at the end of about seven hundred years from the foundation of the city, a corrupt aristocracy and an impoverished and dispirited people were crushed under the pure military despotism of the Emperors. Their history will not be farther pursued, as it only presents the harsh features of unrelenting tyranny, and the abasement and consequent corruption of the people, whose voice was at length heard only in the cry for bread, and the gladiator.

PART II.

ANALYSIS OF THE ROMAN HISTORY.

THE ECONOMICS OF THE ROMAN ARISTOCRATIC SYSTEM APPLIED TO THE CONDITION OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE.—THE CONTRAST BETWEEN THE ROMAN AND BRITISH CORN-LAWS.—THE ROMAN CITIZENS WERE FED FOR THEIR POLITICAL VOTES, BUT BECAME SLAVES FOR WANT OF A PURE REPRESENTATIVE LEGISLATIVE SYSTEM.

BUT there are some circumstances in the Roman history, down to the establishment of the empire under Augustus Cæsar, which will be referred to in support of the definition that Food is Power.

Rome had its system of corn-laws; but the object of them was not to prohibit or restrict the importation of corn into Italy, and thereby give a monopoly of the home-market to the aristocracy in possession of the public lands; it was rather to encourage the introduction of grain, and to reduce its price.

In a country so circumstanced as Italy, with the most fertile lands completely in the hands of the aristocracy, this care on the part of the government to provide an abundant supply of cheap bread, is rather remarkable. A free trade

in corn was allowed and encouraged, and the number of small vessels employed in it was very great. Corn was imported from Sicily, Africa, and from the shores of the Black Sea, and the tonnage annually entered at the port of Rome was about 700,000; the value of the grain for a year's consumption of the capital was about two millions and a half sterling money. This was at a late period of the republic, and at the beginning of the empire. A great part of the lands were thrown out of cultivation for corn, and hence the necessity of supplies from other countries. The aristocrats cleared the lands that they seized of the free labourers, and employed in their stead, the captives taken in war; as it was found more profitable to retain or convert the lands into pasture, to plant vines and other fruit-trees, or to grow timber, than to raise grain. The clearing of the country of the old settled inhabitants, was in its ends similar to those unnatural proceedings which have been witnessed in our own day, of turning off from Scotland and Ireland the small tenantry, the ancestry of whom perhaps had been located on the soil for centuries.

The Roman aristocracy employed the slaves taken in battle, as their labour was less expensive than that of free-men, and hence the rapid decline of the state. In modern times, a system of slavery has been found to be demoralizing to the employers of the slaves; but from an idea of its economy it was continued as long as a superior authority allowed it. The early settlers in the colony of New South Wales would not employ free labourers, while convict slaves could be procured at the cost of maintenance. Among the Romans, the atrocities committed on the unfortunate slaves will appear almost incredible. The emperors were milder than the aristocracy. When the slaves became old and unfit for work, they were "got rid

of" to save their keeping, but the emperor Claudius issued an order to prohibit the masters from killing their slaves.

The turning of the free population off the public lands, caused great numbers of citizens to resort to Rome, where they had to find employment in the best way they could; and as the slaves and clients of the patricians were brought up to various mechanical trades, the free people found many competitors in the enslaved or dependent classes.

But the inhabitants both free and bond had to be fed. So early as the fourth century of the existence of Rome, the supply of provisions was a matter of great difficulty on account of the low state of trade, and the sale of grain was intrusted to commissioners appointed by the State. The population of the capital continued to increase, by the influx of citizens attracted to it, to exercise the right of suffrage. The supply of corn to the citizens, became an established part of the system of government; this was effected at an enormous expense to the governing order; and will show to all governments to the end of time, the retributive consequences of a too grasping disposition in the dominant faction, over the means of subsistence of the great mass of the population. Large numbers were fed to be kept quiet, and other classes were maintained in order to secure their votes at public assemblies.

At first the people were supplied with corn-tickets, to enable them to get so much grain at a price considerably less than the cost or market price.* The grain was delivered from the public granaries on the presentation of the ticket. As the distresses of the people increased, or as the

* Persons with a corn-ticket got 35 pounds of coarse, or 25 lbs of fine bread, at a rate of 2½d. and 3d. per lb. The cost of this bread was about 8½d. a pound, so that the government lost from 6d. to 5½d. a pound, *to feed the people for their votes.*

competition between political leaders became stronger, the terms of quantity and price, offered to the citizens, were more advantageous, and at length gratuitous distributions of corn were issued to a stated number of burghers. In the reign of Augustus, it is said that 200,000 persons received food on free corn-tickets. Tickets were given for a month, a quarter, and afterwards for life, and even became hereditary, and could be bequeathed by will.

All Rome enjoyed corn at reduced rates. This system of a public supply of corn for the population, gave rise to, and encouraged corruption and speculation to an enormous extent, among the governors of provinces, and other officers concerned in the contracts for the corn. Immense fortunes were made in speculation. A gigantic monied interest arose, not to be grappled with.

Joint Stock-Jobbing Companies were formed, to support with their capital great undertakings. The revenues of the state were farmed by the Equestrian order. Advances of money were made on all sorts of property, and from the failure of the payment of the interest, lands, houses, public buildings, and even temples, became ultimately the property of companies or of individual capitalists.

The lower that the Roman people descended towards the abyss of ruin, brought on them by a long continuance of aristocratic oppression, the more striking became the apparent magnificence of hospitality on the one part, and the necessity of receiving that hospitality by the people on the other. At the time of Cataline's conspiracy, the senate caused a distribution of corn to be made to the people, in order to prevent disturbance at the crisis. After the death of Sylla, Crassus, the wealthiest man in Italy, in order to gain the favour of the people, entertained them at a thousand tables, distributed corn to the poor, and fed the

greatest part of the citizens for about three months. Julius Cæsar in his triumphant entrance into Rome, on his return from the African war, distributed to each citizen, ten bushels of corn, ten pounds of oil, and a present of money equal to about forty shillings sterling.

When the struggle for empire between Augustus, Antony, and Pompey was drawing to a close, Augustus promised his troops, lands in Italy, as a recompense for their services; and as Antony claimed for his followers a share in the distribution, a greater degree of bitterness was infused into the combatants. But between them both, the miserable inhabitants were sacrificed, and husbandmen and shepherds, with their wives and children, with piteous cries, in vain implored the mercy of the insolent soldiers who took possession of their farms. Pompey, having command of the sea, cut off all supplies of corn and provisions destined for Italy, which with the capital felt the extremity of distress. The subsistence of the people being thus effectually at the command of a few competitors for power, the citizens had no alternative but to yield to the iron despotism of the conqueror.

Many valuable lessons are to be learned by modern nations, from the history of the Roman people. With a strong passion for liberty, and with a capacity for its enjoyment, the Romans, after a long and severe struggle, sunk down, and politically perished, for the want of the knowledge and practice of the representative system of legislation. The Romans were designed for certain objects, in the extension of their dominion over the nations and tribes of the world; but had God willed that their power should be permanent, it is not irreverent, it is to be hoped, to say, that he would have imparted to them a knowledge of the elective representative principle of government. The Roman government, down to the first emperor, may be designated an aristo-

cracy, checked by a popular veto on its proceedings, but there was no principle of representation and responsibility, as found in the British and North American systems.

The tribunes were more properly attorneys, or protectors, of the people, than their representatives, and there are several cases in which they abused the trust confided to them. They were frequently tempted to join the aristocratic party, against the very citizens who had done them the honour to appoint them to their high office.

Climate has a powerful influence over the customs, manners, and laws of a people. All primitive people congregate in their public assemblies in the open air. Between the parallels of 30° to 40° north or south latitude, the regularity of the weather can be calculated upon, for meetings either religious, political, or social ; the inhabitants in those regions know with certainty what will be the state of the sky almost on any given day in the year ; they enjoy at fixed seasons balmy airs and cloudless heavens, and regulate public business and social amusements accordingly. From the earliest ages, the Diets, or assemblies of the Latin towns, were held at the fountain in the grove of Ferentina ; and the Roman citizens, in voting by their tribes, assembled in the forum, under the canopy of heaven. The circumstances were different with the ancient Germans, and the ancestors of the British people ; unexpected changes of weather, rain and storms, must have often dispersed the public meetings of the people ; but as the love of liberty in the ancient Britons and Anglo-Saxons was as ardent as in the Roman breast, it was not to be subdued by the war of the elements. No buildings were capacious enough to contain the citizens who might assemble to discuss public matters, and from these circumstances of irregularity of climate and deficiency of house-room, the

practice of electing deputies, to meet as representatives of the whole body of citizens, and from that the modern system, no doubt originated. The principle is as ingenious as it is wise, and the British people never can be at the summit of their power, until it be restored to its original purity, and extended through the length and breadth of the land.

When we consider over what a vast portion of the globe the Roman power was established, and how many ages it endured, it strikes one with astonishment to find scarcely any trace of that gigantic power remaining in the institutions or laws of the many nations that were formerly subjected to it. It is true, that the Roman code of laws forms the basis of the civil law of most of the nations of Europe; but this circumstance is of modern date, and has no connection whatever with the original dominion of the Romans over the nations that adopted the Justinian laws.

In the institutions, or even traditions, of nations, we find few relics of Roman government or polity. The Roman system was a pure military one, and it seemed formed for the speedy and effectual amalgamation of the Italian settlers with the mass of the conquered population. But, in the absence of any moral or political remains, we find the stupendous physical works of that extraordinary people standing at this day in every country—the proud monuments of their science, as civil and military engineers.

Throughout Europe, Asia, and Africa, wherever they established their power, we see the ground covered with the ruins of their empire. From Petræa in Arabia to the Grampian Mountains in Scotland, we find the surface marked with military lines, sites of encampments, and remains of roads and bridges; and with so much judgment were the military positions chosen, that in modern warfare, with science unknown to the ancients, the positions would

serve for armies in possession of artillery and the musket, instead of the catapult and the javelin.* The Romans thus rested their dominion on military force, with its accompaniment of forts, walls, and mounds. Their descendants are seen in the present day, but without military power, and without nationality; the petty political States of modern Italy represent the ancient tribes whence the conquering Romans proceeded. The grand cycle is about to come round in Roman history, but what will result from the next turn of it, it is impossible for any human being to predict.

In contrast with the issue of the Roman power, mark the origin and progress of the Anglo race. From the date of the foundation of Rome, to the transfer of the empire to Constantinople, a period elapsed of a thousand and eighty years; that event split the Roman empire, and led to its destruction. Eighteen hundred and ninety-seven years have passed since Julius Cæsar invaded the coasts of England, and what is the state of the island at the present time?

The people have gradually advanced under the representative system of government, *in spite* of a retarding drag-weight which would have ruined any other people. The representative system is the palladium of the British nation.

* In proof of this, two instances in the military annals of Great Britain may be adduced; first, the impregnable position occupied by the Presbyterian army, under Leslie, previous to its coming down to the plain to offer battle to Cromwell at Dunbar, was the site of an ancient Roman camp. Second, The entrenched Roman camp on the Downs, above the village of Woodbury, between Exmouth and Exeter, was chosen for the concentration of a considerable force, of all arms, at the time of the expected invasion by Napoleon, in the beginning of the present century.

The author, in his rambles, has visited both these spots, which command extensive and interesting views of fine countries.

There must be *no* niggard disposition displayed in dispensing the blessings of it. One mighty nation has already started into existence, derived from such a vigorous root. Other nations are springing up under the representative power.

In the parent country, every thing for its safety and happiness depends upon an expansion of the suffrage, and the uncorrupted nature of the election. The Roman people lost their liberties along with their subsistence; they were made poor and thus corrupted, and were at length actually fed for their votes, to enable their political oppressors to mock the citizens in their miserable condition.*

Let the British citizens open their eyes to the peril to which they are now exposed. Corruption may so far undermine the foundations of the representative system, as to lead to a ruin as terrible as that which overwhelmed the Roman people.†

ROME AND CARTHAGE.

The transactions of the Roman people have been considered as illustrative of the domestic struggles between the

* "A nation of legislators and conquerors might assert their claim to the harvests of Africa, which had been purchased with their blood; and it was artfully contrived by Augustus, that in the enjoyment of plenty, the Romans should lose the memory of freedom. But the prodigality of Constantine could not be excused by any consideration, either of public or private interest, and the annual tribute of corn imposed upon Egypt for the benefit of his new capital, was applied to feed a lazy and indolent populace, at the expense of the husbandmen of an industrious province.—*Gibbon's Roman Empire*, chap. xvii.

† The foregoing sketch of the Roman History, applied to the circumstances of Great Britain, is drawn from the cabinet edition of Lardner's History of Rome—from the Roman History, by Niebuhr—and from an abridged history of that extraordinary people.

citizens and the patrician order, and on closing these sketches of the exciting and instructive passages from the history of that remarkable people, it will not be without use to allude cursorily to the fierce commercial and maritime wars, which, with some intervals of peace, were carried on for upwards of a hundred years, between the Romans and Carthaginians, ending in the total destruction of the latter.

There is only the Roman account extant of those wars, and of the condition of the Carthaginian nation. We have therefore in the present day a partial history only.

The resources and power of Carthage were very great, and enabled her to retain the command of the navigation of the Mediterranean for about six hundred years, and to plant colonies along the shores of that sea. The resources appeared to have been entirely derived from manufactures and commerce, for the territory occupied by the Carthaginian republic, was only about forty miles round, and at first a ground-rent was paid for it to the native inhabitants of the country. The possession of the gold and silver mines of Spain, must have put into the power of the Carthaginians immense sums of the precious metals; and the manufacturing ingenuity and enterprise of that people enabled them to acquire the productions of every tribe and nation at that period, within reach of their maritime and terrestrial traffic.

To give an idea of the naval and military strength of Carthage at the height of her power, it will be sufficient to mention the fact, that one of her foreign expeditions consisted of 300,000 men, conveyed in 2,000 ships of war, and 3,000 transports, and taking the vessels at 100 tons each, there would be about half a million of tonnage employed. Neither England nor France, in the present day, could send out to sea such an immense armament.

Whatever were the nature and component parts of the government of Carthage, the system established appeared to have suited the genius of the people, and allowed full development to their physical and mental powers. The extraordinary talents displayed by all the generals and commanders of their foreign enterprises, proved that men were chosen for their abilities and fitness for their respective offices, and not appointed to gratify the ambition or caprice of influential individuals.

As enemies, the Carthaginians and Romans were worthy of each other, and the struggle for the empire of the Mediterranean, and through it, of the world, could terminate only in the destruction of one of the parties. Carthage was finally subjugated, and razed to the ground by the Roman power, in the 147th year before the Christian era, after having stood for more than seven hundred years.

In modern times nothing similar to the issue of the struggle between Rome and Carthage has taken place, but some of the fiercest wars, within the last two hundred years, between European nations, have been commercial wars. The sanguinary battles between the English and the Dutch, towards the end of the seventeenth century, were for the mastery of the narrow seas, and after many vicissitudes the English triumphed. The wars between Great Britain and Spain, in the eighteenth century, were for commercial and colonial objects.

At the present moment, events have occurred in the East, and in the West, which are concentrating the attention and exciting the rivalry of the three great maritime nations of the globe. The great commercial routes, which were opened and frequented by the Tyrians, the Carthaginians, and the Romans, are again becoming the highways to eastern and southern Asia; and European nations are now frequenting

roads to those regions, which have been closed ever since the discovery of the passage by the Cape of Good Hope. The cycle of two thousand years is coming round to the middle of the nineteenth century!

Let Great Britain, France, and America, and every nation, impress these facts on their minds,—that the globe is wide enough for them all, and affords full scope for every useful enterprise, and that it would be folly to waste their energies on mutual destruction.

CHAP. IV.

PASSAGES FROM THE GREAT FRENCH REVOLUTION.

ARISTOCRATIC POWER CRUSHED THE PEOPLE—CURTAILED THEIR SUBSISTENCE AND DROVE THEM INTO FURY—INFATUATION IS APT TO SEIZE UPON ARISTOCRATIC BODIES—ANALOGIES BETWEEN THE OLD FRENCH AND THE PRESENT BRITISH ARISTOCRACIES.

It is affirmed that the control of the subsistence of a people, constitutes power, in the hands of a governing party, whether a monarch or an aristocracy. As there is an analogy between the ancient Roman character and history, and the British of modern ages, a good deal of detail has been given, in illustration of the circumstances of the two nations. Coming down within the memory of the present generation, we have the example of the French nation for the use and instruction of the British people. But from the freshness of the dates and the evidence of the incidents, it will not be necessary to do more than allude to a few striking parallels.

It is a matter of historical notoriety, that excessive taxation, the unequal pressure of the load, the insolence of the privileged classes of society, the consequent derangement of the finances, and the vacillation and irresolution of the government, led to those excesses and outbreaks of the French population, that ended in one of the most terrible revolutions, involving every nation of Europe in its vortex,

which ever convulsed the world. In tracing the origin of that great convulsion, much has been attributed to the writings and intrigues of Voltaire, D'Alembert, Diderot, and the other authors of the *Encyclopedie*. But it is impossible to conceive that any men, however able, and however persevering in the exercise of the most powerful talents over the minds of other men, could have produced such results as those witnessed in France at the end of the 18th century, unless there had been existent in society, cruelty and injustice in the governing power, distress and discontentment among the masses of the people, and, above all, worldly pride, immorality, and hypocrisy in the ministers of the public religion. A venal church with its host of monks, friars, and debauched priests, was held up to the ridicule and contempt of mankind; and Christianity itself was assailed, and for a time publicly abolished, in consequence of the abuse of it by a proud and corrupt hierarchy.

As long as the people of a country have the Bible in their own hands, there need be no apprehension of the fall of this church, or the rise of that one, because every man is supposed to be able to exercise his own judgment, under God, on the course to be followed in the establishment of a public form of religion. In this respect there is no similarity in the present case of Great Britain and of France, previous to the revolution of 1789. But, in the state of the fiscal affairs of the two countries at that period and at present, there is enough to excite an anxious interest in the government and people of Great Britain.

Necker, in his celebrated exposé on the administration of the finances of France, published several years before the Revolution, had, for his great object, the lightening of the burdens of taxation on the lower classes of the people,

by a more equal assessment of the taxes, and by a system of economy both in the collection and in the expenditure of the public money.

Had he accomplished his object of establishing the principles of fair play and justice in the distribution of the public burdens, had he lightened the load of the labouring classes, and transferred to the rich their proper share of the load, all the sophistries of Voltaire, and the intrigues of his associates, would have passed in empty air; and Europe, in all probability, would have been spared the disgrace of being conquered by Napoleon, and saved the trouble afterwards of chaining that extraordinary man to the rock of St. Helena.

Necker wrote like a wise statesman, when he said, "The alterations that may happen in the circumstances of the rich are indifferent to the state, and it is sufficient to subject these variations to the rules of justice and to the empire of the laws; but the diminutions that the moderate incomes of the poor may experience, are so nearly allied to the very sources of their existence, that they interest every one, and demand more especially the attention of the sovereign. . . . The man who by his labour gets no more than what is necessary for the subsistence of himself and his family, is continually exposed to troubles and anxieties; the least diminution of his earnings, or the smallest augmentation of his expenses, affects him in a very sensible manner, and every unfortunate incident that he cannot foresee must lessen those scanty savings that proceed from his labours, and which were intended to supply his wants in the hours of sickness or repose. A minister cannot impress these truths too deeply on his mind."*

* Necker's Administration of the Finances of France, vol. i. Introduction, p. lxxxiv. English Translation, by Thos. Mortimer, 1784.

Those remarks were written at a time, when the relative circumstances of taxation in Great Britain and France were very different. It is absolutely necessary for the inhabitants of this country to look matters sternly in the face, when they are informed, that our system of taxation is now the same in principle, and as intolerable to the bulk of the people, as that which existed in France previous to the great Revolution. Necker says: "The burden of the taxes is more especially aggravating, when too great a share of them falls on the poorest classes of the subjects; for a proper direction in the assignment of the taxes, modifies their essence; and we see that, in Great Britain, that part of the taxes to which the poorer sort is liable, is infinitely less considerable than in France."* How altered is the state of the case in the present year, 1842, from what it was in 1782! but there is an addition of £600,000,000 to the national debt since that period, the interest of which is paid from taxes on Food; by which means the veriest beggar is made to contribute his share. It must be impressed on the minds of the individuals in this country, born since 1815, that the war entered into with the French nation, at the beginning of its Revolution, was one of dynasty,—that is to say, the British government fought to replace the Bourbon family on the throne, and to uphold the French aristocracy.

It must however be stated, that the war, after the truce of Amiens in the year 1802, became, on the part of Great Britain, a defensive one, as the Emperor Napoleon avowed his object to be to reduce or ruin the power and influence of this country. But, taking the grand result of the war, we find the original object carried into full effect, by the restoration of the Bourbon heir to the throne of France in

* P. 53. Vol. I.

1814 ; and by the forcible replacement of him by the armies of Great Britain and her allies, after the decisive victory of Waterloo in the following year. The French people, however, recovered their liberty, and, in one week, neutralized all our efforts during a war of a quarter of a century, by dethroning in 1830, the family that has cost the labouring classes of this country so much misery.

The total amount of taxes in France some years previous to the Revolution was in sterling money, £24,375,000.

The expense of collection between 10 and 11 per cent.

The number of persons of all kinds employed in the collection was about 250,000.

The total amount of taxes of England and Scotland in 1784, including the cost of collection, poor-rates, and turnpikes, was about £17,800,000.

The total amount of taxes, including the cost of collection, poor-rates, and turnpikes in 1842, was about £60,000,000.

So much for wars to force a royal family on a foreign nation !

In proportion to the population, the expenditure of France before the Revolution, was at the rate of about £1 sterling a head. In Great Britain, it is now at the rate of about £2 sterling a head. But in France, it was not so much the amount of the gross taxation, as the unequal pressure, and the injustice of the principle, that caused the evil. The fabric of British taxation is so constructed as to rest on the mass of the population, and press them down with a physical and moral weight :—the physical load, is the actual tax that curtails the subsistence of the labouring classes ; and the moral weight, is the injustice of charging them with the expense of protecting the property of the

wealthy and powerful, in order to save the abstraction of a certain proportion of that property to secure itself. It is necessary to expose the evil principle of British taxation, by every mode of illustration; and, although it is perfectly true, that the wealthiest and most powerful man in the British dominions is as much under the law, and amenable for a breach of it, as the humblest peasant that digs the soil; still it must be impressed on the public mind, that laws taxing or restricting the food of the people, are not felt so as to inconvenience, to a perceptible degree, the wealthy and powerful individuals who make the laws; the labouring classes, and all who exercise industry, are grievously injured in their circumstances by such laws. It is the more necessary to place these truths in a clear light, as, during the agitation caused by the provision-laws, it was repeatedly demanded by the defenders of them, in what consisted the injustice and partiality of laws to which all classes from peers to labourers were alike subject? It was asked, does the poor man pay a *higher* duty on his sugar, coffee, or tea, than the richest individual in the land? Does the law-maker not pay a heavy duty on his high-flavoured wines and other foreign luxuries? and on the porter and ale used in his family, does he not pay the same duty as the labourer? In these cases, it is true that rich and poor are placed on apparently an equal footing, but there the equality ends; for can it be said, that in the object and ends of this enormous taxation, there is reciprocity between the great body of contributors, and the class of men who make and administer the laws, and, above all, who control the distribution of the amount collected?

In France, before the Revolution, the mass of the population was loaded with a heavy taxation, which galled by the

bad adjustment of its weight, and superincumbent was the pressure of privileged classes who preyed on the industry of the people.

Necker was beset by a crowd of begging aristocrats, who pressed on him their respective demands on the exchequer. To one, who asked for a thousand crowns, as being a sum that could not put the treasury to much difficulty, he answered "that a thousand crowns were the amount of the land-tax of two villages, and left the applicant to judge whether he had a right to such a tax."* Barruel, a contemporary historian, thus describes the aristocracy just previous to the Revolution: "Greedy courtiers disgust the monarch with their intrigues—alienate the people by their scandals—corrupt them by their impiety—and irritate them by their luxury" †

Thiers, in his History of the French Revolution, gives the following picture of the state of society before the great catastrophe: "Grandeess, who had abandoned their feudal dignity in favour of the monarch, and who disputed among themselves by intrigue, the property of the people, which was delivered into their hands; and besides an immense population, without any relation with this royal aristocracy, except that of an habitual submission, and the payment of taxes." ‡ "The courtiers who enjoyed the fruits of their abuses, would have wished to see the embarrassments of the treasury terminate, provided it did not cost them a single sacrifice—they commiserated at the chase the vexations exercised against the labourers."§

* Vol. I. p. 47.

† Barruel's History of Jacobinism; English translation by Clifford, 1798. Vol. II. p. 444.

‡ Thiers' History, Vol. I. p. 5.

§ *Ibid.* Vol. I. p. 11.—One of the Ministers of the British Government remarked, in August, 1842, as a reason for the prorogation of Parliament, *that pheasant-shooting had commenced.*

What a striking likeness there is between the French aristocrats at the chase, pitying the vexations exercised against the labourers—and the English legislative sportsmen pursuing their game, while the manufacturing towns of England were in a state of convulsion, by the taxation that is ruining their resources !

The exactions of the aristocracy irritated the French people, and alienated their minds from the laws and monarchical institutions of their country. The monarch was patriotic, and of a disposition the farthest removed from acts of tyranny ; he and his family were humane and benevolent, but they fell victims to popular fury. Their execution was a great national crime ; and it was foolish, because it was useless. The aristocracy could not save them, but they fled from their country—left it to its fate—and threw themselves into the ranks of its enemies. The French nation, like noble steeds become wild—

“ Beauteous and swift, the minions of their race
Turned wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out—
Contending 'gainst obedience, as they would make
War with mankind.” *Macbeth.*

Several circumstances concurred to precipitate France into the abyss of her Revolutions of 1789 and 1793. The intrigues of the secret societies instituted by Voltaire, and conducted by his successors—the discovery of the conspiracy against society by Weishaupt, and the German Illuminati—and the ripening of the plans of the great leaders of the revolutionary party—all came to a head and burst forth into action, within that interval of five years.

The secret association, which comprised all the most violent revolutionists, disguised the real designs of the conspirators, and secured the benevolent sympathies of the public, by assuming the philanthropic name, or designation,

of "*Friends of the Blacks*" of the West Indies and the Americas. This, and the other secret societies, at length merged into the famous club of the Jacobins.

Among the immediate causes of the excitement of the public mind about this time, the return of the troops that had aided the Americans in the achievement of their national independence, must not be omitted, as stimulating the people, by the speeches of the soldiers in favour of liberty.

The French people, being thus predisposed for great changes, were impelled to action by the secret movers; and the movement was accomplished on the principle laid down by the secret club of the Propagandists. The whole doctrine of this sect rested on the following basis: "*Want and opinion are the two agents which make all men act; cause the want—govern opinions—and you will overturn all the existing systems, however well consolidated they may appear.*"* The funds of this club, or order, were in the year 1790, about one million sterling in specie.

The scarcity of bread, amounting to famine, was one of the most distressing circumstances in the outbreak of the Revolution. The outbreak was the actual effect of hunger, and was caused by the acts of the revolutionary leaders. The finances of the government were in a state of derangement, which prevented measures for the supply of food. But all the corn that could be procured was bought by the conspirators, and stowed in warehouses, or deposited in barges, and sent from place to place, out of reach of the inhabitants of Paris, who clamorously called for bread. Barruel accuses Necker and Philip d'Orleans as the authors of this attempt to starve the people. It appeared that a great quantity of corn was deposited in Normandy, which the Parliament

* Barruel's History of Jacobinism, vol. ii. p. 437.

of Rouen wished to be distributed, but the answer of Necker to the application was evasive, and one of delay. On his dismissal from the ministry the second time, Barruel states that "the Parliament of Rouen had then obtained proof, that the same boats, laden with the same corn, had been sent from Paris—back again—then embarked at Rouen for Havre—and thence returned again, half rotten." *

Of the fearful fact of the famine and of its terrible consequences, there is evidence in the history of the time. In the attack on the bastille—"the courage of the besiegers was inflamed by the horrors of famine, there being at that time only twenty-four hours' provision of bread in Paris. For some days the people had assembled in crowds round the shops of the bakers, who were obliged to have a guard of soldiers to protect them from the famished multitude; while the women, rendered furious by want, cried in the resolute tone of despair—*We must have bread for our children.*"†

And in the march to Versailles we have another frightful picture: "All the bread which could be procured in the town of Versailles was distributed among the 'Poissards,' who, with savage ferocity, held up their morsels of bread on their bloody pikes towards the balcony, where the queen stood, crying in a tone of defiance, '*We have bread.*'‡ Such are the vivid pictures of the scene, drawn by an eye-witness.

The miseries of the French people drew forth the sympathy of the people of Great Britain. But the trial and execution of a king, innocent of the calamities that befell his country, checked the current of feeling; and war

* Barruel, vol. i. p. 264.

† Letters of Helen Maria Williams, written in France, 1790.

‡ *Ibid.*

followed, to carry into another channel the passions of the British nation. At length terror reigned in France, and chilled to the core all sympathy for her Revolution. What a dreadful blow was struck on the cause of rational liberty by the Revolution in France! The spirit of demons took possession of her public men, and the following answer of the Committee of Public Safety to the inhabitants of Montauban, who were alarmed by the want of provisions, is truly diabolical. "Fear not, France has a sufficiency for twelve millions of inhabitants, all the rest (about 12,300,000) must be put to death, and then there will be no scarcity of bread."*

But after such terrible domestic convulsions, and fierce foreign wars that desolated Europe, has France gained nothing at the end of fifty years? Perhaps the half of her inhabitants who lived at the beginning of the Revolution, were pushed from existence ten or fifteen years earlier than they would have been, had the Revolution not taken place. It is appalling to reflect on such things, and to sum up in the imagination the miseries that ensued. But the victims of the guillotine, of the dungeons, of famine, of war, and of pestilence, are now at rest "after life's fitful fever," and what is the present state of France?—her population is 34,200,000 of souls, against 24,300,000 fifty years ago—She possesses a representative legislative system that guarantees her liberties—she has established the charter of her freedom, under a constitutional monarch, called

* Report of the "Comité de Salut Public," 8 Aug. 1795. Barruel, vol. iv. page 443.

A sentiment approaching in atrocity to this announcement of the French demon, has been perceived, in the discussion by the organs of the dominant faction in England, on the decadence of the manufacturing interest of the country.

to the throne by the voice of the nation—she has abolished a hereditary legislative aristocracy, and attained an equalization of property by a law of inheritance, annulling the right of primogeniture—she has secured equal rights and privileges to all her citizens—she enjoys the inestimable blessings of trial by jury, liberty of the press, liberty of conscience, and religious toleration.

Her agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, have increased, and are now more flourishing than at any former period of her history; her military and naval power are as formidable as they ever were in past ages; her improvements in practical science, applied to roads and other public works, are equal to those of almost any other country, and her influence abroad is powerful enough to insure from other nations, a proper attention to her interests and her dignity.*

* Comparative Statement of the Condition of Great Britain and France :—

	Great Britain and Ireland.	France.
Superficies,	acres, 77,400,000	130,000,000
Land cultivated	acres, 46,500,000	66,500,000
Produce of wheat per acre, bushels,	21	14
Population	26,800,000	34,200,000
Inhabitants per square mile	220	165
Gross amount of public revenue, £52,000,000		45,000,000
Average per head of the inhabitants, £1 19 0		£1 6 6
Direct Land Tax	£1,000,000	10,000,000
	Customs	£5,000,000
	Salt	2,200,000
Taxes on Consumption { Customs. } £37,000,000	Taxes on wine, spirits, tobacco, and gunpowder,	7,300,000
		14,500,000

INTEREST OF NATIONAL DEBT.

Great Britain.	France.
£28,700,000	£10,200,000

Our lands, either from greater fertility or from superior husbandry, give in wheat three bushels for two of the French lands; and notwithstanding this increase, the price of wheat, flour, or bread, is generally about fifty

per cent dearer in London than Paris. How arises this amazing disparity in price? On the consumption of bread this increase will make yearly about twenty millions of pounds sterling more than if bought in Paris.

The direct land-tax in France is £10,000,000.

The direct land-tax in Great Britain is only £1,000,000

The duties on consumption of food and other articles in Great Britain and Ireland is 37,000,000. In France it is only £14,500,000.

These items explain at a glance the cause of the disparity. The twenty millions extra paid in the price of bread go to increase the rents of the lands.

France has increased in strength since her great Revolution. Great Britain is suffering in her most vital interests in consequence of the debt incurred to arrest that Revolution, and of unjust and impolitic laws imposed since the peace of 1815.

CHAP. V.

SPAIN.

THE SPANISH ARISTOCRATIC POWER HAS ALMOST ROOTED UP THE TREE OF WEALTH, IN ORDER TO SEIZE THE FRUIT.

IN the present circumstances of the world, particularly in those of Europe, as affecting the position of Great Britain and Spain, it is of great importance to both these nations to weigh well the question of their mutual interest, and to take a retrospective and prospective view of their relative condition.

The people of this country must remember that Spain in the sixteenth century, and in the beginning of the seventeenth, in the general affairs of the world, held a station and exercised an influence similar to what Great Britain possesses in the present age. Circumstances gave her the lead in colonization, and enabled her to plant settlements, undisturbed by any European power, throughout the West India Islands, North and South America, and in the Indian Ocean. Her ships spread over the globe, carried her commerce from East to West, and to the uttermost bounds of the known earth. Her naval ascendancy was undisputed for a long period; and it was on the shores of Britain, that it first received the shock to its greatness. Allusions have been frequently made in the course of this treatise to the circumstances of Spain as affording examples to this country: and in referring again to that country, it is not

the design to dwell with minuteness on any incident in its history.

The northern race that poured itself into Spain, on the downfall of the Roman power, then carried with it the love of liberty and independence which characterized the Celtic and Gothic tribes. Hence the early establishment in that country of legislative representative assemblies, under the title of Cortes.

The Moors threw themselves into Spain, and occupied the greater part of the country. But the Gothic race took refuge in the mountains of the northern provinces, and there maintained themselves for ages; when at length, towards the end of the fifteenth century, the African and Asiatic races were finally destroyed, or driven from the country.

Previous to the expulsion of the Moors, the kings of Spain were politically very weak, and they had to offer liberal rewards of grants of lands and honours to the successful leaders of the expeditions against the infidels. The aristocratic order by these means acquired great power, and became, on occasions, overbearing to the sovereign himself.

The legislative body assembled in one chamber, and the popular influence was gradually overpowered by the aristocratic nature of the majority of the members that voted the laws.* The aristocracy crushed the popular representation,

* It would appear, that since the days of Cervantes, the cultivation of the country, the scene of the adventures of his hero, has woefully fallen off. This fact I learn from an observation made by Mr. Nicholas, the barber who attended the late Mr. Inglis, in his rambles to trace the footsteps of Don Quixote. The traveller was remarking on the paucity of windmills on the plain where the celebrated adventure took place, and the explanation given is as follows: "Partly it might be so—said the barber—but I myself recollect when fourteen, in place of four windmills, were to be seen there. The neighbouring country was more a corn-country than it is now—for the

and almost overruled the kingly power. This forms another instance of the ruin that results to the liberties of a people, by the legislative power being invested in *one* chamber of deputies. Ferdinand, after being freed from the danger of the Moors, succeeded, by wise and politic measures, in lowering the pretensions of the nobles, and in establishing his own authority over them.

The political dissensions of ages, the decline and partial ruin of all the great interests of Spain, can be traced to the aristocratic or exclusive principle that pervades her institutions, and dictates her laws. And as long as it is allowed to exist, so sure will decay and ruin follow the steps of contending aristocratic factions, until at length the country itself shall become the prey of some foreign people, united by the hope of conquest and location on its fertile soil.

Circumstances peculiar to Spain, have increased and extended the blasting influence of the spoliatory principle. The lands of the Mesta doomed entire regions to the state of deserts—and the dead hands of the church, and the indolent pride of aristocratic power, have combined to keep the lands untouched by the plough. The fanatical prejudices of the feeble manufacturing interest still farther damp the national enterprise, and close the ports of the nation to commerce and its civilization.

The lands from which the Moors were expelled, were divided in the usual barbaric way among a few successful warriors.

The following is the account of the division of property in Spain in the fifteenth century :—

“A great part of the territory in Spain was engrossed by the nobility. According to the account of a contemporary cultivation of saffron has supplanted that of corn, and there is therefore less occasion for windmills.”—*Inglis's Rambles in Spain*, page 61.

writer, which he affirms was as accurate as the nature of the subject would admit, the sum total of the annual revenue of their lands amounted to one million four hundred and eighty-two thousand ducats. If we make allowance for the great difference in the value of money in the fifteenth century, from that which it now bears, and consider that the catalogue of Marinæus includes only the "*Titulados*" or nobility, whose families were distinguished by some honorary title, their wealth must appear very great. The commons of Castile, in their contests with the crown, complain of the extensive property of the nobility as extremely pernicious to the kingdom. In one of their manifestoes, they assert that from Valladolid to Saint Jago, in Galicia, which was a hundred leagues, the crown did not possess more than three villages. All the rest belonged to the nobility, and could be subject to no public burden. It appears from the testimony of authors, that these extensive possessions were bestowed upon the *ricos hombres*, *hidalgos*, and *cavalleros*, by the kings of Castile, in rewards for the assistance which they had received from them in expelling the Moors. They likewise obtained by the same means, a considerable influence in the cities, many of which anciently depended upon the nobility."

The foregoing description is extrated from the notes and illustrations to Dr. Robertson's History of the State of Europe, and of the Reign of Charles the Fifth of Spain.*

The same author says, in another part of the history:—
"It was one of the privileges of the nobles, that their lands were exempt from the burden of taxes. The charge of supporting the troops requisite for the public safety, fell wholly upon the cities; and their kings being obliged frequently to apply to them for aid, found it necessary to

* Vol. I, page 419, Note 34.

gain their favour by concessions, which not only extended their immunities, but added to their wealth and power."

There are materials for reflection, afforded by the historical facts adduced, and they ought to be applied to form a parallel with the state of Great Britain at the present day. The grand characteristics in each nation, in the two periods of the history, are the enormous amount of property acquired by an exclusive order, at the expense of the community, and the almost exemption of that property from the burdens of taxation, while the rest of the citizens are charged with the expenses of the general government. There is, however, this great difference between the two nations at their respective periods. The British people are a comparatively very united one, and, with the exception of Ireland, are free from the danger of local or provincial jealousies and animosities. They are confiding, and hence the weight of their burdens. But, unless their physical and intellectual construction be changed entirely, it is against their known qualities, that they will long submit to a state of things which will sink the nation to the depths of wretchedness, and ruin all its hopes of future greatness.

We at all times perceive in society the operation of principles which shall produce changes for good or evil; and in the chronicles of the day, we read the narration of events, the origin and tendency of which are not obvious to every observer.

Spain, within these last fifty years, has presented an epitome of her history for a thousand years before—always agitated and torn by domestic factions, fomented by the foreigner.

Barcelona yet smokes with the fires which her insurrection kindled; and the sound of the bombardment which laid her in ruins, still dwells on the ear of Europe.

The diplomacy of Britain and France is occupied in the adjustment of the questions which have arisen out of events that partake of the character belonging to barbarous ages; and men endeavour to trace them to the intrigues of foreign agents, or to the rivalries of domestic political leaders. But these events have their origin from causes which lie deep in society, and the following appears to be a true account of the moving springs of these, and all the other convulsions which disturb Spain. "Several other causes have contributed to render the military unpopular in Barcelona. In the present dilapidated state of Spanish finances, each locality is obliged in a great measure to support garrisons: and the municipality, instead of taxing the wealthy householders, is too apt to grind the money from the poor, by duties levied on provisions at the gates of the town. *It was this hated Octroi which began the present insurrection.*" . . . "We observe that Zurbano had been visiting the posts, and enjoining the custom-house men to use the utmost rigour in levying duties, saying he would forgive past faults, but would severely punish all fresh acts of indulgence." . . . "The city is becoming troubled, no one knowing why; for quarrels between collectors of the duty and country people to introduce wine, were wont to take place every holiday." We see in this description, given in the leading article of the London Morning Chronicle of the 26th November, 1842, the development of principles which lead to the revolution of nations,—namely, the encroachment on, or seizure of, the means of subsistence of a people, to an extent which destroys their comfort, and enrages their feelings to outbreaks from the bounds of order. Will men ever learn wisdom, to be true and just to themselves!

CHAP. VI.

RUSSIA.

ARISTOCRACY RESTRAINS DESPOTISM FROM RAISING A BODY OF SERFS TO THE CONDITION OF FREE CITIZENS.

RUSSIA is an empire, that, like a huge Colossus, bestrides Europe and Asia. It consists of a body, of limbs, and a head. Its head is an intellectual personal despotism, controlling a rude aristocracy, that crushes a nation of slaves.

Russia is a body of vast magnitude, but it wants a principle of motion and activity ; it is inert—but it keeps Europe in dread of its receiving an impulse. Heavy bodies are not easily moved, but motion once given, the effect is tremendous.

Agrarian laws, similar to those of Moses, or of Servius Tullius, enacted in favour of the Russian population, would, in all probability, change the destiny of the world. They would, in half a generation, raise a population from the condition of miserable hordes of serfs, dull and passive like the cattle that graze around them, to the rank of free-men, possessed of property in the soil from which they raised their subsistence. The military tenure, which doubtless would be attached to their lands, would convert legions of armed animal machines into bands and armies of militia,

ready to defend their acquisitions, or march in search of fresh conquests, at the command of some ambitious leader.

To realize this state of things, it only requires a brave, intelligent, and patriotic monarch, to step down from his throne—put himself at the head of his countrymen—call around him a national council—and proceed to assign property, and proclaim liberty, to all. In this enterprise he would probably lose his life, through means familiar to Asiatic revolutions; but this would not give much concern to a brave man—ambitious of historical immortality, as the liberator and benefactor of his oppressed countrymen.

The character of the present monarch, and the circumstances in which he has already been placed towards the aristocratic body of his empire, make even the realization of the magnificent conception within the range of possibility.*

The very suggestion of a plan which might bring, on western and southern Europe, an armed migration from the northern regions, is startling. But the idea ought to have its weight with nations and their governments, and, in anticipation of any such danger, the government of every country in Europe should see its interests and safety identified with the comfort, prosperity, and wealth of the great body of the people.

A people possessed of some property in the country they inhabit, are the fittest to repel an invasion, however formidable, of semibarbarians who rush on with the desire of acquiring possessions.

* "The interference of the Crown between the lord and the serf, is, however, resented with intense animosity by an Aristocracy, which stands itself in a servile relation to the Crown; and all the excesses of arbitrary power will be more easily forgiven to an Emperor of Russia, than the employment of that power for the relief of the lowest class of his subjects." *Leading Article of the Times of 18th May, 1842.*

CHAP. VII.

ARISTOCRACY AND DEMOCRACY COMPARED.

THE PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRACY ARE PRESERVATIVE—THE PRINCIPLES OF ARISTOCRACY ARE DESTRUCTIVE AND SPOILIATORY—ARISTOCRACY IS TO DEMOCRACY WHAT A UNIT IS TO A MILLION.

THE general history of the Roman people offers to modern nations lessons rather on what is to be shunned and deprecated, than examples to be imitated, in the conduct of public affairs. The wild declamation on Roman transactions, uttered by the French orators, in the first stages of the great French Revolution, and the mummeries which were enacted by the actors in that fearful drama, in imitation of passages in the history of the Roman republic, have inflicted a severe wound on the people of Europe, and have thrown back the cause of rational liberty. Governments, whether under the personal despotism of a monarch, or under the control of an aristocracy, took the alarm, and during these last fifty years have been incessantly active, through means of legislation, and the agency of the press, to establish and diffuse the opinion, that the great mass of the population of every country is actuated by a desire, or rather passion, to change laws, overthrow institutions, and seize on the property of the wealthy classes of society. And so successful have their efforts been to disseminate these opinions, and create alarm in the minds

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of the timid, that men really now seem to live in terror of their own species.

One of the greatest errors which the present generation has committed in considering the events of the Great French Revolution, and one almost universally entertained, is that of charging the French people, or laying on Democracy, the responsibility of the atrocities inflicted on person and property, during the progress of the Revolution, from the execution of Louis XVI., to the establishment of the military power of Napoleon. The massacres by the guillotine, and the confiscations and seizures of property, were the acts of an Aristocracy, of the most exaggerated, and even demoniacal, character; and if the populace of Paris and other cities were roused to action, they were merely the instruments wielded by the hands of the clubs, or the exclusive associations. Danton explained in a brief sentence the whole secret of that terrible power, that for a while held princes, priests, and people under the sword: "*We are few in number—we must show no mercy for the sake of liberty, to those who are opposed to us.*"

It is a monstrous untruth, and a libel on human nature, to assert that there is a disposition in the great majority of the people of any country, to destroy or to appropriate the possessions of the minority.* The evidence of history in

* It would be a happy thing for nations, were a more destructive propensity to prevail in the great mass of mankind. The world would not then behold the plunderings, the seizures, and the spoliations of aristocratic bodies practised on the passive multitude; nor would heaven be outraged by the daring hypocrisy of priesthood standing between man and the Deity; the poor mortal delivering, with a submissive air, his corn and the firstlings of his flocks, to feed the luxury of worldly ecclesiastics. Were such a disposition to exist to a moderate extent, the first approach of a spoliative power would be checked by those intended to be made the victims.

every country on the globe, for five thousand years, proves the contrary. Could society exist for a month anywhere with such a disposition in the majority? Impossible—there would ensue a wild uproar, and in a violent but brief struggle mankind would perish from the earth. What protects the large heaps of property of every kind, lying exposed, or but nominally secured by thin partitions, in towns and cities, but the indisposition of men to encroach on their neighbours or their property?

The twenty-eight thousand criminals who found their way into the jails of the United Kingdom, in the year 1841, formed an infinitesimal minority of the British people. And so it is with the people of every nation. The vast majority of men are disposed to be honest, peaceable, and orderly, and all that they want is to be left alone and undisturbed in the possession of what God and nature have assigned to them. Men will naturally be satisfied with their lot, as long as anything like fair play be shown to them, and they are always reluctant to rouse themselves to action, in order to redress their grievances.—The events of history are generally grossly misrepresented; and, wherever a people worn out by vexatious proceedings, and starved by a cruel and rapacious governing power, rouse themselves to recover their own, they are cut down like dogs in the streets, or tried as rebels, and branded as traitors. The struggles by the Roman people against the Aristocracy, had not for their object the confiscation and appropriation of the possessions of the patricians; but were truly and simply to recover the lands that really belonged to the people, but which had been seized by the men who held the power of the state.

The knowledge of this peaceable disposition, inherent in the great mass of mankind, leads to and encourages the

usurpation over them of a small number of individuals, who first seize the property, and then monopolize the power, of the community. It is well to state distinctly and broadly, that all those popular convulsions which have taken place in countries, and led to a new balance of property, and a complete change of power, arose from the oppression exercised by selfish and unjust governments driving the people to despair. It is against the nature of things, for a great multitude deliberately to concert and execute a plan of general spoliation; but it will be seen from the whole range of history, that forcible possession, insidious encroachment, and indirect confiscation of property, have been the work of a small number of persons.* In this consists the great danger of hereditary aristocratic government to the interests and happiness of the mass of the people. But before proceeding farther, it may be well to define the meaning which is here given to the word Aristocracy.

No stress is laid on that arrogance and assumption of importance, peculiar to the members of an aristocratic order; nor are titles and other appendages to rank taken into account. People have a right to their own opinions, and may designate themselves Dukes of the Setting Sun, or Marquises of the Seven Stars, or Lords of the Golden Horns, if they think proper so to do. All these things are perfectly harmless, and may even be useful.

It would form a curious chapter in the history of mankind, to bring together all the various titles of nobility and personal decorations conferred on distinguished individuals.


* A band of highwaymen is more formidable to a vicinity, when it is composed of a few resolute and desperate men, than when it consists of a large number. In the first case there is greater secrecy and unity of design, and the property and lives of peaceable citizens are more exposed, and at the mercy of the robbers. In a multitude, there is the chance of a "split" among the depredators, by which honest men gain, and justice is more likely to be satisfied.

All tribes and nations, from the rudest up to the most refined, have had their orders of merit. The laurel-wreath of the ancient Greeks and Romans was considered an ornament for the head of a conqueror, and now the laurel crown is a poetical image which enriches the language of every people. Feathers, grease, and paint are the ornaments of noble savages—ribbons and medals are the decorations among civilized men—gold and silver buttons and sticks, are also used as marks of distinction; but the ornament considered the greatest honour, in a very powerful and enlightened nation, is *a blue velvet ligature for tying up the stocking of the left leg.*

No titles or orders of merit are allowed by the American Republicans, and in this prohibition they act unwisely, because for want of some rational plan of honorary civic or political character, they are fostering the most pernicious of all aristocratic nominal distinction—those of military rank. The burden of every tourist's notes on the United States, is on the wonder of Generals, Colonels, and Majors being keepers of taverns, and such like concerns. Reason cannot be brought to bear on such a question, but it is seen that in all ages, and in every nation, men, even the wisest and bravest, have set a great value on certain names and toys. Nelson was sustained in that great conflict in which he lost his life, by the hope of having his name inscribed in the national temple which contains the ashes of great men.

How many brilliant exploits, by sea and land, in the service of their country, have been performed by men in expectation of these honorary rewards! Their valour is the more disinterested, and ought therefore to be the more admired.

Johnson defines the word "Aristocracy" to be, "that form of government, which places the supreme power in the nobles, without a king, and exclusively of the people."



This definition may do for schoolmen, but it will not serve for practical men, who take lessons from history. In ancient Rome, the government was in the hands of an Aristocracy, without a king, but the people were not excluded. In modern Sweden, there was a King and an Aristocracy, but the latter was so grasping, as to deprive the people of their privileges, and to make the sovereign himself a mere president of the senate, that engrossed for itself all the authority of the state. The people, to get quit of the intolerable yoke, surrendered their liberties into the hands of the king, and preferred living under an absolute monarch, to being crushed by aristocratic power. Perhaps the only government which answers the description, was that of Venice; it was a pure Aristocracy—for there was no king—as the Doge was merely the mouthpiece of the senate, and the people were excluded; and not only excluded from participation in any part of public business, but condemned to live in distrust of secret spies, and in terror of dungeons, racks, and poniards, and all the other horrors embodied in the Spanish Inquisition. France had its King, Aristocracy, and People: and the blood in which its history is written, displays the horrors that ensue from a long course of Aristocratic exactions, working on an excitable and energetic population. The British nation has also its Sovereign, Aristocracy, and People; and history has yet to record the events which shall issue from the struggle that is at present going on, to restore to the people the subsistence, of which a system of partial, unjust, and impolitic laws has so long deprived them.

An Aristocracy may be defined to be,—a body of individuals who are in possession of large properties, and who, by prescription or law, enjoy peculiar privileges and a certain control, in their collective capacity, over the property

and liberties of the rest of their fellow-countrymen. These privileges and power may either descend hereditarily, or they may be transferred by the present holders to other persons, to fill up vacancies in the order. The British aristocratic legislative power is hereditary, and vacancies by the extinction of families, and new seats, may be filled by the Sovereign, who can at discretion add to the number of the Aristocracy. But, according to the meaning given to the word by the above definition, those beautiful illustrations of the aristocratic principle, shown in the Scotch municipal corporations that existed as late as in the year 1832, were pure Aristocracies, very nearly approaching to hereditary. It is true, that the portly country-butcher, or the polished city-haberdasher, who enjoyed the very many good things which the office of baillie put in his power, was not so sure of leaving the magisterial robes to Son Thomas, or to Nephew Andrew, as the Peer is of knowing that his title and legislative genius will go in the right line to his son Lord John. But yet, in the cannie aristocratic boroughs of former times, there was such a kindly feeling between the men of the proper stamp—such a mutual understanding—that Thomas and Andrew in regular course appeared at the council-board, and voted, with all the gravity of senators, some municipal tax to be paid by their townsmen, who had no control whatever over the proceedings of those self-elected legislators, and still less over the money raised from the citizens. The British legislative Aristocracy opposed with the utmost vehemence the abolition of such a system ; which confirms the identity of principle that exists between the two orders of imperial and borough Aristocracy.

The aristocratic principle is also acted on in those boards of directors of certain joint-stock companies, at

which the same men, or their nominees, are seen seated year after year, and perhaps obstinately persevere in measures of an equivocal nature.

Colonial Aristocracies in British settlements are generally of the most rampant character. The system of free grants of land to dependents or favourites of the home-ministry, bestowed perhaps for some party services, or to enrich some poor relation of a minister, has established a body of men in possession of a large quantity of public property; and the spirit of the order often rises to a pitch of sublimity, in the colonial legislative councils.

As in water face answereth to face, so do men in aristocratic or irresponsible bodies; in the most out-of-the-way corners of the world, we discern the same features. In Guatimala, Mr. Stephens thus describes the "*nobility*" of that country: "The central (or aristocratic) party consisted of a few leading families, which, by reason of certain privileges of monopoly for importations, under the old Spanish government, assumed the tone of nobles, sustained by the priests and friars, and by the religious feeling of the country." * These "*nobles*" wished to preserve the usages of the colonial system, and resisted every innovation that might encroach upon the privileges of the church, or interfere with their own interests or prejudices. They wanted to retain to themselves the importation of merchandise—the making of laws—and the filling of the offices of the church; and the people were to take just what was offered to them, or go without anything.

It is remarked of corporate bodies, that the individuals who compose them, give their assent to measures, or acts, which they would shrink from performing, on their own single responsibility. The men, individually, may be very

* See Stephens' Central America, vol. i. p. 195.

upright persons, and have a full average quantity of the milk of human kindness in them, but yet experience every day proves to us, that the result or tendency of the acts of deliberative bodies of men, is often very different from that course of action which, probably, three-fourths or nine-tenths of the members would follow, were they to act independently. This is a curious property in human nature ; and appears to be designed by Providence, to warn us against the danger of entrusting irresponsible power to a number of men, who shall meet together, year after year, —talk over and discuss matters—warp statements from the true bias—heat each other's minds—bandy fallacies from one to another—keep all the time in view some particular interest to be promoted or depressed—and end by passing a law, which, in its effects, shall be spoliatory, and of course unjust to many millions of their fellow-citizens.

In illustration of this, let a hypothetical case be put :—Suppose that, at a particular time, a change should take place in the circumstances of a country, which from the nature of things must be of incalculable advantage to its inhabitants ; and imagine this case to be the termination of a long and severe war, and the transition to a state of universal peace. But, a small portion of the people, to whom are intrusted the making of laws, find that their property is for a time depreciated by the change of circumstances ; and, in order to keep up its value, to enable the proprietors to live in their usual style, a law is passed, which in its effects, is neither more nor less than a tax on the food, namely bread and meat, consumed by every individual, man, woman, and child, throughout the country ; and, from the nature of the society in which this occurs, the most hard-working and poorest classes of the inhabitants are the heaviest taxed. It will at once appear incredible, that any

class of human beings, however poor and abject, should submit to such a nefarious imposition, but the thing is so contrived, that the tax is concealed from the consumer, in the price which he pays to the baker and butcher: and on the other hand, the receivers of the tax get their respective proportions in a disguised shape from the farmers, in the rents paid for the use of the lands. It is not an easy matter to form a sliding scale of the exact sums, which the legislative landowners are supposed to put into their pockets, or into their bankers' books, derived from this tax; but whether they be five hundred pounds or fifty thousand pounds each, it may be confidently stated, that very few of those landowners would venture to collect, in a direct manner, the tax, to make up their respective shares. The nerves of the strongest man, even supposing he had the disposition to collect the quota that belonged to him, would utterly fail him in the attempt.

Who could enter the dwelling of the plain, hard-working man, with a demand of a tax on his food, for the purposes stated in the hypothesis? who could stand for one instant in that wretched hovel, and be able to subdue the feelings on making the iniquitous charge of a rate to diminish still more the scanty provision of the coarsest food to sustain the unhappy inmates?

The collector, struck with remorse at the enormity of the demand, would dash the pittance, wrung from the miserable beings, to the ground, and rush from the scene of his rapacity. Events will show how near this suppositious case comes to the realities of life.

A despot, however cruel and long-lived, dies at last, and the probability is, that a better and wiser man will succeed him in the exercise of power. As the vast majority of men are disposed to do good, a country derives the advantage of

this disposition in the majority of its sovereigns; and a man, though biased towards evil, will naturally try to act well on taking the place of a bad predecessor. Even a harsh temper, and a selfish disposition, in a despotic ruler, will be smoothed down and gratified by the happiness and prosperity of his subjects. A tyrant instinctively perceives his own interests identified with those of his people; but there stands between the monarch and his subjects, a body of men, who encroach on the latter, and gradually control the former, so as to make him their tool. Even a despot, possessed of more than ordinary Asiatic power, becomes helpless when his measures interfere with the privileges of his Aristocracy: he may indulge his caprices in slaughtering by thousands his inferior vassals, but he dare not attempt to improve their condition, if, by doing so, the interests, or even the prejudices, of his great men are touched. The fair and modest Vashti was sacrificed at the instigation of the princes of Ahasuerus, because her refusal to expose herself to their gaze at the royal banquet, when commanded, might, by the example, encourage the ladies of Persia to assume an independence not agreeable to their noble lords and masters. And the same Ahasuerus, the very concentration of Eastern despotism, was the passive instrument, in the hands of one of his creatures, to sign an order to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish, a considerable portion of his subjects, both young and old, little children and women, in one day, in order to gratify the jealousy, spite, and revenge of his courtiers.

But to come down to our own time—we have the present Emperor of all the Russias, thwarted and threatened by his Aristocracy, because he wishes to free from their thralldom the unfortunate serfs of his country, and raise them in the scale of society.

And in this country, the kindly disposition of the patriot King William the Fourth, was for a season neutralized, by the obstinate resistance of the aristocratic body, in his attempts to support his countrymen in acquiring liberty.

The individuals that compose an Aristocracy die, but the order survives, and, unless curbed by a spirited and enlightened people, becomes more and more consolidated, till it crushes beneath its weight every interest in the state, and brings the population to be divided into two sections,—one a small number, possessed of the property and the power of the country—the other, the great mass, fearfully contrasting, in their poverty, ignorance, restlessness, and despair, with the magnificence, luxury, and reckless bearing of the minority.

An elective legislative Aristocracy has resting-points, at which the people can periodically exercise some influence; but a hereditary legislative power spreads and dovetails itself into the very frame-work of society. Were all the individuals to die in the same years, the country would have at the end of regular periods, a new set of men to enter upon their legislative duties.

It would appear that in 1830, out of the whole population of England and Wales, one death took place in fifty-eight persons, but in ten years from that date the mortality had increased to one death in about forty-five persons.

When the law of a country confers upon a class of the people, the gift or talent of legislation by inheritance, bountiful nature appears to add longevity beyond the lot of ordinary mortals. This remarkable fact is established by the bills of mortality. Indeed, the longevity of hereditary legislators is notorious. This is accounted for by the extremely comfortable circumstances in which the members are born, and live throughout an existence apparently placed above

care and sorrow. While the rest of their countrymen are getting a shorter allowance of life, the law guarantees that the survivors shall not want a generation of law-makers always ready at hand. Out of a hereditary legislative assembly of 490 members, at the rate of one death for every sixty persons, we shall have a fraction more than eight deaths in a year, and of course eight new men to fill up the vacancies.* But as opinions and views of aristocratic interests are hereditary, as well as titles and legislative virtues, it thus happens that by the death of one member and the accession of another, there is no break in the legislative net, which extends, generation after generation, drawing within its meshes every thing and person considered fit and proper to be retained.

An aristocratic body, of any of the categories enumerated, necessarily consists of a comparatively small number of persons, united firmly together by mutual interest and by that strongest of all ties—a feeling, or opinion of self-importance as members of a society, in possession of privileges which the rest of the community do not enjoy. In a political Aristocracy, there are grades, which, though marking an inequality among the members, really serve to unite and attract them to a centre. This principle of union is best explained by analogy: it is said that mackerel are caught by a piece of red rag used as bait, and a whole shoal will compete for the tempting prize; and so it is with the crowd of aristocrats, who will support their order, and advocate its interests, for the reward of a strip of a red or blue ribbon.

An Aristocracy is continually endeavouring to impress on the world a belief, that to it belong exclusively the talents and virtues necessary for the government of the state—that

* In the year 1840, I find that eight Peers departed this life.

it is the true and legitimate founder of every thing that is great and good in the laws and institutions of the country,—that it is the only proper guardian of these laws and institutions—and it is incessantly active in inculcating and maintaining the idea, by bold assertion, or by insinuation, that the great body of the people are destructively disposed towards the institutions, laws, and properties of the country; and that it would be attended with the greatest danger, to entrust the people with a share in the government.

A governing Aristocracy spouts itself into a false eloquence, on the ignorance, vices, and poverty of the people, as disqualifying them to judge, or to act, in public affairs; and yet an Aristocracy, either lay or theocratic, never of its own free will takes measures for the education and improvement of the people.*

As timid people of property are very apt to be influenced by the outcry, that property would be endangered by extending political power more widely among the citizens, it will be well to examine the subject more closely; and it will be perceived that, as far as history goes, the danger to

* See the miserable schemes, and still more miserable sums, voted for the purposes of the education of so many millions of souls in Great Britain and Ireland. Since the above was written, a fact has come to the knowledge of the Author, which speaks volumes on the system in this country. A subscription is solicited by the Scotch National Church, Crown Court, Covent Garden, to provide common and religious education for the children of persons in connection with the National Church; and before a shilling can be appropriated to the real objects of the charity, the large sum of £500 must be paid over to the Duke of Bedford, as the fine or premium on the lease of a few hundred square yards of ground for the school-house; and this noble person, no doubt, exacts the uttermost farthing fixed in the bond. Yet he supports a tax on the industrious citizens, out of which he votes a sum for the education of their children, scarcely amounting to as much as is expended on Her Majesty's hounds. And mark, also—his own property escapes untaxed!

property arises from the efforts of a small number to possess it, and not from a mass of people. A small number can consult and agree on a plan of operations, and by union and secrecy can put in execution their schemes, till they end in almost a general encroachment on the interests of the mass of the people, scarcely aware of the fact, until it is discovered by the decrease or loss of property. A large quantity of land, or other property, if portioned among a multitude, would be perhaps sufficient for their subsistence, and even comfortable independence, in families; but if appropriated by a small number of persons, would form princely fortunes to each; and, in the latter case, the multitude would become the dependents or slaves of those who seized the lands. This describes the origin of most of the nations on the globe. The violence and cunning of the few, overpowered the weak, *because* disunited, multitude.

It certainly would be more consonant with the dictates of reason and nature, that every family should at the outstart be enabled to subsist itself, than that a few families should have large properties at the expense of the rest. An equitable division ought to be made at first, and afterwards to leave to the superior industry and abilities of individuals to increase their property. But this plan does not suit the aristocratic spirit, or rather, it is quite opposed to it, and therefore large quantities of property in few hands are preferred to the system of every one having enough. The principle, once admitted and acted upon, continues in vigour during the progress of society. In the changes which take place, the mass of the people must improve in condition, even in spite of every drawback; and in some countries, the people are so active and intelligent, as gradually to outgrow the aristocratic party, with all its power and advantages. But, in the early stages of improve-

ment, the governing aristocratic party continue by various means to augment their property, in order to keep pace with the citizens advancing to wealth and influence. The eye of the aristocratic power is keen and penetrating, and its hand is ever ready to seize its prey. It is always borne in mind, and the principle enforced wherever possible, that property divided among many, falls in a small lot to each individual, but, if secured for a few, will enable the possessors to increase their enjoyments, and extend their influence over their fellow-citizens. This is done under plausible pretexts, and so insidious is the system of spoliation, that the effect is perhaps not observed till long after the mischief is done. A volume could be filled with an account of the encroachments of the Aristocracy on the property of the people.

The theocratic branch of an Aristocratic order is the most rapacious, and appears to exult in the exhibition of a bare-faced disregard of the rights of humanity—the cry has ever been “Give flesh to roast for the priest—but thou shalt give it me now, and if not I will take it by force.” Such is the language held at this very day in Christian England and Ireland, and the wealth that is thus wrung from many millions of men to support a hierarchy which their conscience condemns, is appropriated to swell the fortunes of a few dignitaries, instead of being applied to afford a comfortable subsistence to the men who carry the consolations of religion to the poor and broken-hearted.

Foreigners come to our land, and write of its “glory and its shame.”* They point to its glory as resting on the virtue of its people, preserved amidst privations altogether unparalleled, and borne with a patient fortitude, which excites the

* See an American publication on England, under the title of the “*Glory and Shame of England*.”

astonishment of the very men, whose policy and laws, in the State and Church, constitute its "shame."

Whenever a charitable or public fund begins to swell to an amount worthy of notice, then is the moment of danger to it. How comes it, that all the universities and wealthy public schools, are now almost exclusively appropriated to the uses of the Aristocracy? A fund perhaps was bequeathed for the purposes of education, and would be sufficient probably to afford instruction in reading, writing, and arithmetic, to all the children in a village or town—but of what use is knowledge to the children of people who must labour for subsistence, and the funds are forthwith devoted to educate the sons of the men who are the employers of the village folks, and the law-makers and priests for the rest of the community? On tracing to the origin, and following the progress of aristocratic power to consolidation, it will be perceived that a principle of encroachment and spoliation has been perseveringly pursued.* This is asserted as in the nature of things, and not uttered in a declamatory or party spirit. Almost the whole system of modern taxation rests on the principle of encroachment on the property of the masses, in order to collect a fund, it may be, for the public service, or for objects of aristocratic aggrandizement. And when a loss must be sustained, the amount is thrown off the few, to fall on the thousands, as was experienced in the calling in the gold-coinage of light weight.† Neither the

* In the British legislation there is a sensitiveness evinced in all its proceedings touching property, which is to be seen in no other legislative body. There is a sacredness attempted to be thrown on every question affecting the rights of property in present tenure, which really seems to imply a consciousness of a weakness of title by which property is held.

† Money article of *Times*, 20th June, 1842:—"Last Saturday, when the different operatives were paid their wages, there was such a general panic among the humbler classes in different parts of London, that even good

Government nor the Bank of England was willing to bear the loss.

Aristocratic schemes of spoliation, and conspiracies to acquire possession of property, are of course very different in their mode of operation in different countries. Every thing depends on the circumstances of the country, and the character of its people—their general occupation—their customs—and, above all, the state of their civilization. Among a semibarbarous people, open violence or undisguised fraud is resorted to; but in civilized nations, the ends are gained by means of false representation of the people, and of laws passed to favour and extend the interests of the governing faction at the cost of the rest of the citizens.

In the Roman history, there occurs one remarkable instance of an attempt, by a section of the aristocratic party, to seize the property of the citizens, and to throw the whole country into the horrors of civil convulsion. The author and leader of this infamous plot was Cataline, whose name is now, in all languages, synonymous with everything dark and atrocious. His scheme is by eminence denominated *The Conspiracy*. It was not so much a project to change the form of government, and to introduce a new order of things, as an attempt, by the most profligate of the Roman Aristocracy, to involve the country in the horrors of massacre and plunder, so that the performers might get quit of their debts, and enrich themselves with the spoils of the citizens. “For more than a year it was known that a part of the highest functionaries had entered into a league with the

sovereigns were not taken by some of the small shopkeepers, without some allowance, (say 6d.) to guarantee them from loss.

“There are classes, among which it is in vain to hope for the possession of a pair of scales; and yet the misfortune is, that whilst they are the most helpless classes of all, they and the retail tradesmen, alone pay the national loss arising from the deficiency in the weight of the sovereign.”

most desperate of the rabble; that they had their cut-throat conclaves in the city, and that Cataline even aspired to become consul.* We however live in happier times than those that gave birth to such designs.

I have stated, that it is a libel on human nature to assert that there is a disposition, in the great majority of mankind, to destroy or appropriate the possessions of the minority. This proposition may not be directly affirmed, but it is clearly implied in the arguments used, by the possessors and favourers of aristocratic power, against the extension of the suffrage to the great body of the people. The assertion, or insinuation, goes the length of making the people not only to be wicked, but also stupid. Supposing that there did exist a disposition in the great mass of mankind, to seize on the large properties belonging to the minority the people would at first consider in what way the spoliation should be effected, and, after the property had been seized, how it should be divided among the multitude.

In a very populous country, even with enormous wealth in the possession of certain classes of the population, it would be found, that when each individual or family got his share, the amount would be scarcely worth the risk and trouble of the division. Everything would be unsettled, and every person put out of his place, and in a few years great inequalities in fortunes would again appear. As it is impossible to conceive, that the original possessors of the property would relinquish the hold of it without a violent struggle; the supposition of the apportionment of the property among the great mass of the people, implies the operation of some extraordinary power to effect the division,—either by a miracle, through a second Moses, or by some great conqueror, from a foreign country, seizing by violence all the property of the conquered territory, and

* Lardner's Rome.

dividing it anew among the people, in proportion to their families, in order to reconcile them to their conqueror, and make them support his government and dynasty. Out of these two cases, every person capable of reasoning must know, that property could only be taken by an impetuous rush of a multitude upon the small number of proprietors; and that, in the confusion, every one would seize hold of what he could get, and the consequence would be, that the boldest and strongest among the multitude, would, at the termination of the struggle, be the possessors, in the stead of the men who first held the property. The result would be little more than a change of hands, but with a great uproar and confusion in bringing about the change.

To the great numbers of individuals living in crowded towns and cities, in destitution and misery, the idea of the possession of a comfortable competency, from a fine estate in the neighbourhood, must be one of delight; especially when their minds are irritated by the sight of abundance, and every luxury enjoyed by persons who, with this contrast in circumstances, perhaps look down without compassion on their wretched neighbours.

But these crowds of poverty-stricken men know, that, supposing a division were to be made, the property could only be obtained through a scramble for it among all as miserable as themselves. Now, the horror of a scramble is much more general in the great majority of men, than a disposition, even among a minority of them, to seize violently the property of others. Although man is a gregarious animal, there is yet in his nature a repugnance to have a scramble for anything. One cannot explain why, but most persons experience a sensation of dread on entering a crowd; there is a vague apprehension of danger in doing so, distinct from that to the pocket; panics are easily raised

when people are crowded together, and they are seen running away without knowing for what. This is not instinct, but it is the effect of experience acquired from infancy to age. Children in the nursery, boys at school, and men in masses, learn, by cuffs, blows, wounds, and death, to dread a scramble for anything of value, which may be thrown among them. Among a group of children, it is that robust urchin, with a face like the full-moon, who tears and shoves aside his companions, and collects for his own share, more than half of the sugar-plums which should form a feast for the whole. In the playground of the school, half-a-dozen of active, athletic, bold fellows, with keen eyes, and features sharpened by study in their class, and by exercise out of doors, pick up more pence or marbles, scrambled for on a holiday, than any fifty or hundred boys of quiet, passive, or reflective characters.

In that scene which took place, lately in the streets of one of our large cities, there was a scramble of the most fearful and melancholy nature. A procession of artisans, who could get no employment, perambulated the streets in hopes of rousing the compassion of the citizens, when a benevolent individual took them to a baker's shop, to supply them with bread : a rush and a scramble for the loaves took place, during which the charitable distributor was in danger of his life from the eagerness of the hungry multitude to secure his bounty !*

* Horrible scramble at the Earthquake in St. Domingo, 7th May, 1842.—
“ The work of pillage commenced on a small scale, but in twenty-four hours the country people began to flock in, and in forty-eight hours the town was full. Along the Bord de la Mer, one might see the plunderers cutting and stabbing each other over their spoil. Great numbers have been killed. . . The town is in a most pitiable state—not one habitable house in it ; no provisions ; the dead in a great part unburied, save the sepulture the

It thus appears that there is a strong, and almost general repugnance, to a division of property by a scramble : the exception is to be found among the bold, the bad, and the enterprising, who would be sure of getting the lion's share. Those popular outbreaks, which sometimes take place, are the ebullitions of passion, roused by injustice and tyrannical conduct on the part of the governing power ; or the prejudices of a people are perhaps grossly offended, so as to cause the people to act violently. These times of excitement and bursts of violence are no more indicative of the natural disposition of the multitude, than the delirium and acts of a man in a fever are to be taken as denoting his usual temper and conduct.

Perhaps the only instance of a deliberately formed and matured plan for the seizure and appropriation of property by conspirators, was that carried on by Cataline and his band of aristocratical ruffians.

As respects the great mass of the British population, there are no symptoms of any disposition towards spoliation. Their exertions are directed to free themselves from the intolerable effects of a system which is spoliatory of their own property, inasmuch as it checks their industry, restricts their employment, and taxes in every shape the fruits of their labour. Let them alone, to work for their own subsistence as they can best procure it, and accumulate their savings for their families, and they will not interfere with the property of any man, however wealthy and powerful. The love of property is one of the strongest and most enduring passions in man, and the idea of property seems to be one of the earliest conceived by the human mind.

ruins have afforded ; a danger of pestilence ; and a total disorganization, of the people."—Extract from letter from Dr. Daly, dated Cape Haytien, 12th May, 1842. *See Times, 2d July.*

The infant before he leaves his mother's arms, seems to have formed the idea that the coral that hangs round his neck belongs to *him*, and will cry bitterly, or grasp eagerly the toy, if one tries to deprive him of it. In the aged and dying, the love of property is often painfully witnessed.

This attachment that every man has to his own property, forms a good guarantee for the security of that of others. In one sense, the owner of a humble dwelling with a small plot of ground attached, would not exchange it for another property of much greater value: who can estimate, but the owner, the value which early associations, which labour, anxiety, perhaps danger, have bestowed on what he possesses? If ever a government really and truly representing the British people be established, its first and last care will be that every man may, if disposed, have a fair chance of acquiring some property. Almost the only property which vast numbers possess are their limbs, and the abilities which God has given them; and if bad and impolitic laws restrain the industrious classes from a free exercise of those limbs and talents, what is the effect but an encroachment on their property?

In a Democracy, where every man has some voice or influence in the public affairs, of what use would it be to the individuals who compose the community to disturb the social fabric by splitting property which had accumulated in the hands of a small portion of the population, among a great multitude? The interest of every man would make him regard the interests and rights of others, hence, a perfect balance would be preserved. But this strict regard to mutual interest would be a complete check on any section of the people combining to encroach on the property and rights of the majority; and it is the impracticability of carrying into effect a system of spoliation, where

a people exercise a proper control over their legislature and government, that makes a popular preponderance in a country so obnoxious to and so dreaded by an Aristocracy. Whenever the aristocratic or exclusive principle becomes active and strong, the property of the mass of the people is in danger, and will as certainly in the course of time slide from them, and accumulate in other hands, as the waters of the lake will disappear and leave dry its bed, when they are drawn off by drains into fish-ponds, or other artificial reservoirs. A large extension of the suffrage in this country, accompanied with a proper safeguard to the voters in giving their votes conscientiously, would at once be the means of checking the encroachment of the aristocratic or monopolizing party; but it would assuredly lead to no system of general spoliation by the people.

The United States of North America are under a government of pure Representative Democracy; and the occurrences which have recently taken place in that country, have formed subjects of declamation to parties in Great Britain, who consider Democracy as tending to destructive measures. The almost universal insolvency of banks and joint-stock companies, and, above all, the repudiation of public debt by some debtor-state, have excited distrust, and roused feelings of indignation, not only in this country, but throughout Europe, against such reckless proceedings. It is not, however, the design here to enter into an explanation of those transactions, or to attempt to defend the character of the actors and abettors in them. The transactions alluded to have, in every sense of the word, been disgraceful to the Americans; and all that is aimed at in these observations is, to clear the system or principle of Democracy from the shame of having given rise or encouragement to them. As there are, unfortunately, so many

sufferers in this country by the failure of banks and federal governments in America, there is attached to the subject much painful feeling. But in the United States the distress has been universal, and there is scarcely an individual there, however humble, who has not been injured in his circumstances and comfort by the great financial revolution. This being assumed, it is therefore against every principle of human nature to assert that the people themselves deliberately planned and executed their own ruin !

The fact of the matter appears to be, that in the system of banks and speculative enterprises in the United States, the principle of Democracy—that is, every person, or a great number of persons, having an interest in the establishment—does not exist: and, as the aristocratic principle flourishes in as much vigour in America, though not possessed of political power, as it does under a monarchical government, it is the exclusive or irresponsible system which has caused the financial ruin of the United States, and discredited them throughout the money-markets of Europe. What establishment in that country set the example of insolvency, and commenced the ruin? We believe it was the United States Bank, considered the national concern. Now, there was no democratic influence allowed to operate there, but the whole concern was managed on the most exclusive or aristocratic principle, and the financial Cataline of the establishment conducted the conspiracy against the public.

It will be the duty of the future historian to investigate the dark transactions of the financial revolutions of the United States, and the result will be that the democratic principle was sacrificed by the cunning and selfishness of aristocracies of banks, of joint-stock speculations, and of the legislatures of some particular states.

A blessing to mankind will be derived from the down-break of the national credit of the United States. Communities and nations will be compelled to husband their resources, and raise within the year the funds necessary for their government, and it will not henceforth be tolerated, that the living generation shall mortgage the resources of future generations for objects of a temporary or ambitious nature.

In support of the position taken, that the discreditable financial transactions in the United States, did not proceed from the democratic principle, and indeed had nothing to do with it, the following evidence is adduced. The first is from a little work entitled "The Present Age," by the late Doctor Channing, than whom a more enlightened and independent witness could not be produced. In alluding to the financial and commercial embarrassments of his country, he says—"Let not the poor bear the burden of the rich. At this moment, we are groaning over the depressed and dishonoured state of our country? and who, let me ask, have shaken its credit, and made so many of its institutions bankrupt? The poor—or the rich: Whence is it, that the incomes of the widow, the orphan, the aged, have been narrowed, and multitudes on both sides of the ocean brought to the brink of want? Is it from an outbreak of popular fury? Is it from gangs of thieves sprung from the mob?—We know the truth; and it shows us where the great danger to property lies. Communities fall by the vices of the great, not the small." *

The next is from a letter by the "Genevese Traveller," published in the London "*Times*," of 1st November, 1842.

"In no form or shape has the Federal government, or any of its functionaries, at any time given countenance to

* "The Present Age, by W. E. Channing: 1841."

the fraudulent and demoralizing doctrine of repudiation—and by repudiation I mean a declaration, that a State is not most solemnly bound to pay all debts contracted by the State or its agents.”

“Whatever indiscreet, and perhaps in some instances unprincipled, individuals may have proposed or contemplated, it is a fact, that no legislature of any one of the twenty-six States has passed any law, or done any act, indicating a disposition to sustain and carry out the doctrine of repudiation; nor has any governor, or other high official character (with one exception) suggested such a measure as expedient or proper. It is true, in some instances, the equity of the claims against particular States has been denied, and this has been the pretext for refusing payment. So far, and no farther, have the several States gone.” . .

“The American people, as a people, consider anything like repudiation profligate and dishonest; and never, until they shall have been tenfold more vicious than they now are, and their whole character shall have changed, will they become the advocates of such an unprincipled measure.”*

* *Times*, 1st Nov. 1842.

CHAP. VIII.

ARISTOCRACY AND COLONIZATION.

THE ARISTOCRATIC PRINCIPLE DISPLAYED IN SCHEMES OF COLONIZATION FROM EUROPE SINCE THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.—THE RESULT HAS BEEN EITHER BARBARISM OR REVOLUTION, IN THE COLONIES PLANTED.*

As contrasts to the beneficent plans of the legislators of the ancient Jews and Romans in their Agrarian laws, a few cases in which the British people have a deep interest, will be adduced.

At the end of seven hundred and seventy years, the power of this country, the laws of it, the condition of its inhabitants as respects their subsistence, their moral and religious education, their civil and political liberties—all are yet affected by the measures of William of Normandy. The people of this country, with all their intelligence, their industry, and indefatigable perseverance, have not worked themselves out of the baneful influence arising from the division of the lands by that conqueror. Most of the lands of England were portioned in the most reckless manner to

*British America is an instance of civilized and successful revolution.—Spanish America has succeeded in throwing off the yoke of Spain, but for want of wise regulations for the division and assignment of the waste lands, the inhabitants are retrograding to semibarbarism.

The case of Saint Domingo presents a terrible example of the vengeance taken by the population, in the general slaughter of the governing party of another race.

The Brazils, with a territory of great fertility, and almost boundless resources, lie under the Upas tree of aristocratic and sacerdotal growth.

his favourite followers. One military follower received for his share of the spoliation, between seven and eight hundred manors. The county of Norfolk, containing about a million and three hundred thousand acres, was divided among sixty-six proprietors: one man received a grant of the whole palatinate of Chester, and in this proportion the soil of England was wrenched from the natives, and bestowed on a few barbarous warriors.

This is a matter of history long since past, and people may exclaim, what use can it be to bring it forward to the present generation! But it is of great use to refer to such passages of our history, in order to remind every individual at present living, that a similar principle pervades British law, and that in the British plans of colonization, put in execution within the present century, grants of waste lands have been as lavishly bestowed on the followers of a minister of the crown, as those which William granted to his subordinates.

The discovery of America interested the whole human race; and where is the man in Europe, at this day, who has not some direct or remote interest in that country?

The Pope, the Head of the Christian Church in the fifteenth century—in the plenitude of his power, and from the vast stores of his geographical knowledge—made a grant to the King of Spain of all the countries discovered by Columbus. His power was acknowledged and obeyed by the nations of Europe at that period; but as Galileo had not yet been born, to enlighten mankind, and to bewilder the Pope with a knowledge of this earth and its relation to the sun, it so happened that His Holiness was anything but precise touching degrees of latitude; and as respected the meridian of the countries granted, it was found afterwards, that the Bull of assignment was nearly

bringing the Spaniards into war with the Portuguese, for the right to countries situated on the coasts of Hindostan. So much for the Pope's interference, in granting the possession of newly-discovered countries !

In a work like this, the example of the Pope will be followed, in alluding to various important matters which come under notice, in a very sketchy sort of way, somewhat similar to His Holiness's sweeping outlines, described in his Bull of assignment of America to Spain.

If any country in the world is capable of affording lessons to Great Britain, it is Spain. Commanding the finest geographical position in Europe, and containing within herself the most abundant natural resources, she is, in the present day, in a state of decrepitude and decay. Her history presents greater vicissitudes than those of any other nation in Europe.

In very remote ages, Spain was to the Carthaginian, and the other great commercial states on the shores of the Mediterranean, what America afterwards became to herself. Before the Christian era, she was one of the most wealthy countries of Western Europe ; and making every allowance for the exaggerations of tradition, there are grounds for believing, that the population then was as great as in the present century. She was a most valuable appendage of the Roman empire ; and the ruins of cities and public works testify to the former grandeur of the Roman dominion. Her whole history is exciting and instructive, but it presents the fearful details of contentions of different races of men, and the debasing effects on the population, of opposing creeds. Spain has been the battle-ground, not only of nations, but of entire sections of the globe ; Europe, Asia, and Africa have struggled for the possession ; and, as if to consummate her ruin, America was discovered, to strike

the fatal blow. And what is melancholy to reflect is, that though the populations are mixed, they are on the whole composed of good materials, and can excel in the arts of peace, as much as they have always shown themselves brave and skilful in war. In all ages, the greatest warriors have displayed their genius in its plains, or upon its mountains. Hannibal, Scipio, Pompey, Julius Cæsar, Napoleon, and Wellington, have all acquired that species of renown which gains so much notice in history.

One of the causes of the long-continued disturbed state of Spain may be assigned—the mixed nature of the population, and their want of a mutual interest. There is little to be perceived of a national or public spirit pervading all classes. The inhabitants of the four northern provinces differ as much, in their temperament and habits, from those of the southern and eastern shores, as the northern Germans differ from the Italians; but yet, contrariety of character among the inhabitants of a country is not an obstacle to a perfect national union; as we see in the northern and southern states of the united provinces of North America, where mutual interest, and love of the form of government, bind people of very opposite tempers very strongly together.

So it might happen with the various classes of people who live in Spain; but for want of a proper representation, they have not been able to agree on the points of compromise.

But it is in vain to expect any favourable change in that country, until an Agrarian law be enforced. A lay and theocratic Aristocracy, of the most withering character, has for centuries kept half the lands in the state of deserts. It used to be estimated, that a third of the lands in Spain belonged to the church.

The pestilence which, about the middle of the fourteenth century, swept half of the human race from the earth, was severely felt in Spain, where it is said about two-thirds of the inhabitants perished. Those who survived took possession of the lands of them who fell, and for want of labourers the lands were converted into pasturage; hence the state of things that led to the establishment of the *Mesta*—that singular system of pasturage-laws peculiar to Spain. Throughout a great part of that fine country, agriculture is actually prohibited in the districts inhabited by the sheep! Enclosures are not allowed to be made, and hence the vast plains destitute of timber.

Man, by his laws, acts as a curse on the soil; and will any one, after reflecting on the condition of Spain, say to the present generation, that there is no place for them at Nature's feast?

Spain carried to the vast regions of America, which she called her colonies, the principles which blasted her own soil; and all that now remains to her, is the tradition, that the sun at one period never set on her dominions!*

* It is extraordinary to relate, that in Mexico, the most valuable of all the former colonies of Spain, it has never occurred to any party to pass an Agrarian law, for the breaking up of those fertile wildernesses, called estates, belonging to private individuals. The *mayorazgos*, or entails, are still, I believe, allowed to exist; and those immense tracts of country, originally granted by the King of Spain, in virtue of the Pope's Bull, to Cortes, are administered for the benefit of the descendants, or the present representatives, of that bold and successful adventurer. The grand error committed by Mexico, and all the other countries of Spanish America, was the adoption of theoretical constitutions of government, in place of systems suited to the genius, customs, and habits of the people. The Mexican Congress imagined that it was legislating wisely and patriotically, when it decreed the abolition of titles, and the destruction of heraldic devices. What use was it to change names, and leave substances untouched? To pass a law to call a man "Citizen" instead of "Marquis," and let him retain a power to keep

France was the next, that sent out to plant colonies in America. Canada was taken possession of, and, in the true spirit of the age, large tracts of land were granted on the Gothic military tenure; and the consequence has been, that the French population at this day in Canada present the singular spectacle of the laws and customs of Europe, of the sixteenth century, existing on the banks of the St. Lawrence; and, in many respects, the country is thus much behind the United States, on the right bank of that river.

Queen Elizabeth had no influence with the Pope; and even had she had faith in a papal colonizing Bull, she was too proud to ask for one. She therefore, on her own grant to one of her courtiers, disposed of a tract of country along the shores of North America, extending to more than a thousand miles in length. The royal prerogative was at that time in its greatest vigour, and continued still in strength, during the reigns of James I. and the two Charles's: hence all the settlements formed in America by the English, were chartered to men of rank, or to certain favoured individuals, with a view to enrich them.

As the population of England did not exceed at that period four millions of souls, we, who live in the present day, cannot assert that there existed a necessity for colonies, from superabundant numbers of people.

The evil principle of the British monopolizing system of colonization, lies in the placing of a third party between the state as the proprietor of the public lands, and the men by whose industry the lands are to be made productive. Throughout the whole system, from the first grant

a whole province unpopulated and uncultivated, was childish. It was similar to stripping the lace off the dresses of surrendered troops, instead of taking the arms out of their hands.

issued by Queen Elizabeth, down to the last charter given to a New Zealand Company, the same fatal error is preserved. The grantees of the lands bestowed by Queen Elizabeth and her successors, soon found out, that, without labourers, their possessions were unproductive wastes.

A third party, as proprietor between the state and the cultivators, acts either with profuse liberality, pernicious to those who receive it—or, if gain is to be made, he squeezes out of the laborious cultivator, as much of the produce of the land as possible. A man who received a whole province as an estate, was at times very bountiful in his grants to other persons, with a view to encourage them to do something to improve the lands. Hence a struggle was carried on, by a few persons greedy of gain, to subdue nature in the wilderness of a boundless extent.

Many plans were devised to procure labourers; the accidental arrival of a vessel with negro slaves into a port of Virginia, was the first introduction of the curse of slavery; then convicted felons were transported, and assigned as labourers; and afterwards, persons were engaged in England, and indentured to the colonists, which gave rise to a system of kidnapping of the most unfeeling character.

The colonists wanted wives; and those of Virginia, as they became rich, offered so many hundred pounds of tobacco, as the freight of well-behaved young women from England, to become the mothers of nations.

Place the Anglo-Saxon race in any part of the globe, where there is ground to stand on, water to float in, and air to breathe, and to a certainty something will be accomplished. In spite of every drawback, from the barbarous mode of assignment of the public lands, the colonists increased in numbers, and acquired fresh energies by their advance to

wealth. Tyrannical measures of the home-government, and religious persecution, drove thousands of brave and conscientious men to seek for their families a new country ; and they found it in the forests on the banks of the Delaware, and the shores of the bay of Boston.

Kings and governments of England have been generally too much engrossed with the monopolies or the party objects of the day, to be able to extend their mental vision far into colonial matters ; and it was a fatal want of foresight in Charles I., when he interfered with the liberty of Cromwell, Hampden, Pym, and others, by restraining them from embarking for a colony in North America. It is curious to speculate on what might have been the consequences, had Cromwell proceeded to settle in the colonies. He, and his enthusiastic followers in the civil wars, fought with the sword in one hand and the Bible in the other, and sustained themselves in battle by the examples of the Israelites against their enemies. In a colony, he would have been a legislator, and a leader ; and perhaps, in the division of lands, he might have adopted the regulations of Moses, and anticipated by two centuries the advance of his adopted country.

But failing the presence of that extraordinary man, the British colonies proceeded to extend their footsteps into the wilderness. Men became famous "according as they lifted up axes upon the thick trees ;"* and at length, towards the end of the eighteenth century, the colonies—like a young giant nurtured in the forest, and strengthened by labour—sprang from the earth, and achieved their independence of a powerful empire.

Britain acquired the Canadas by conquest ; and grafting on the original seignorial tenures of French law, the system

* Psalms lxxiv. 5.

of free grants of land, she has produced, in these colonies, a state of matters, which bids defiance to every principle of common sense. The wit of man appears to have been taxed, to devise extraordinary modes of individuals getting their names inscribed on official charts; and the spots thus distinguished, registered as estates belonging to such individuals. An epic poem might be composed, on the beauty and advantages of the plan of assigning lands to "leaders and their associates," and the romantic names of the daughters of a councillor of government be sung in chorus, as the possessors of their 1200 acres of land each. The spirit of Caleb ought to animate the large Canadian land-owners, —but as there are no castles to be assaulted there, let the reward be for the heaviest load of timber!

But what will create amazement in those not accustomed to give attention to such matters, is to find, that at the Cape of Good Hope the public lands were granted on a principle of circles, whereof the radius was three miles!

After the loss of the North American Colonies, it was deemed expedient by the British government of the day, to look out for another continent; and, fortunately for it, Captain Cook, like a second Columbus, arrived at the time, and announced the discovery of a Southern world. Our jails were filled with redundant inmates, whom we could no longer despatch to America, and it was therefore determined to transport them to Botany Bay.

Wonderful incidents crowd on a man who writes on the affairs of this country; and here it becomes a matter of course to allude to the discovery of an Australian continent, and to record the establishment of a British colony on it.

But the business here is with the division and assignment of the lands inhabited by a few scanty tribes of savages and kangaroos.

The scheme of division was very anomalous. At first there was an approach to a rational principle of allotment, by assigning to each convict, as he became free, a certain quantity of land ; but as an opinion of the value of the lands began to prevail, the plan was changed, and schemes of aggrandizement were formed in and out of the colony. The system of free grants in profuse quantities was in vigour, till within a few years ago, when a change was made, to check the ministers of government from wasting the public lands on their followers.

However, a strong monied power is now allowed to step in, and stand between the state and the farmer and shepherd, who really make the lands of any use at all. In the Australian colonies there are many monstrosities in the assignment of public lands; and the experience of three hundred years appears to have been completely thrown away.

There is no space here for going into details, but in honour of the man who at present occupies the post of prime minister of the British government, a few cases will be noticed, especially as they occurred during a former administration, in which he had a share.

Although not in strict chronological order, yet the name of Peel must have precedence in the list of grantees of land in Australia.

In the year 1829, a special grant of 500,000 acres in Western Australia, was made to Mr. Thomas Peel, a relation of the individual who at present holds the reins of government of this country. . Acres . 500,000

In the year 1824, a special grant of 1,000,000 acres on the eastern coast of that country, was made to a certain number of individuals residing in London and elsewhere, and styling themselves the "Agricultural Company of Australia" . 1,000,000

Brought forward . . . Acres 1,500,000	
In the same year, another grant of 500,000	
acres was made in Van Diemen's Land,	
to individuals in and out of London,	
styling themselves the "Van Diemen's	
Land Company"	500,000

Acres . . . 2,000,000

The conditions, on which the grant to Peel was given, were, the investment of funds to the extent of one shilling and sixpence an acre, including the cost of passage of 300 labourers from England, to the promised land at the Swan River. The conditions of the grants to the companies were, the payment of a quit-rent of one and a half per cent on the land valued at one shilling and sixpence an acre, equal to about one farthing an acre of annual rent: or, the redemption of the quit-rent might be made, by the employment and maintenance of a certain number of convicts, beginning with the number of 600, and not exceed 1400 men.

With the exception of the convicts, these cases will illustrate the whole system of British colonization from the time of Elizabeth down to the present:—favouritism, quackery, jobbing, and partiality to a few, have been the rule, to the total neglect of the great mass of the people. It is not necessary to ascertain whether Mr. Thomas Peel fulfilled the conditions of his grant or not: the thing turned out a complete failure, but the grand result has been that the regulations for the disposal of land on the western coasts of Australia, require of the farmers and settlers, who go from this country to that part of the world, the price of 20s. an acre, for land that was originally granted to Peel at 1s. 6d!—Can the people of this great nation repose con-

fidence in the judgment and integrity of a minister, who in colonial arrangements, affecting the property and even the lives of thousands of families, has such a strong personal or family interest in favour of a speculative colony!

With respect to the grant of one million of acres to "the Australian Agricultural Company;" at the end of the sixteenth year, it appears that there were not one thousand acres in cultivation—that the population of a tract of country equal in area to the county of Kent, in England, consisted of seventy-nine free individuals, and 547 convicts without wives—that the whole colony of New South Wales was subject to a monopoly of the supply of coals by that Company, and a price charged accordingly for that indispensable necessary of life. All these results have taken place from plans which were formed or approved of by the Right Hon. Sir Robert Peel, while a member of the government from 1824 to 1829.*

The national feelings of the people of this country are in favour of colonization, because the people are persuaded into the belief, that colonies promote our manufactures, commerce, and, above all, our shipping. But to a great extent, there is a mistake on all these points.

* The annual report published on the 31st January, 1843, confirms the statement in the text. The Australian Agricultural Company, established under the auspices of Sir Robert Peel, while in the government, is a miserable failure, and a disgrace to the country, and to the very age. From December, 1838, to December, 1841, the population has increased from 626 to 713 souls, of whom 389 are convicts. The sheep have diminished from 85,647, in 1838, to 78,569, in 1841—and in 1841 the value of the "*growing crops*" of a Company, with a grant of one million of acres is put down in the accounts at £245!

The only item that appears to have increased is 1,401 tons of coals more in 1841, than in the previous year; and be it observed, that the Company possesses a monopoly of the supply of coal to the colony of New South Wales!

Our manufacturers, our merchants, our shipowners, and our industrious farmers, are certainly very little benefited by 620 individuals employed in tending cattle and sheep spread over a million of acres. These lands are picked and chosen for the advantage of situation, for their fertility, and, above all, for the command of water, and consequently they ought to be able to maintain a considerable population.

The country must be poor indeed, if it could not support 20,000 families, of five persons each, thus affording a farm of fifty acres to each family: plenty of markets for the produce would be found in the towns and villages near.

Now, the supply of these 100,000 inhabitants would be an object to manufacturers, and the conveyance of the supplies would require a good many vessels.

There is another interest to be taken into account, namely, the banking interest, which in the Australian colonies appears of value and importance. All persons acquainted with the principles of business must agree, that in banking, an amount divided into a great many small sums, affords for business more security and profit than the same amount made up of a few large sums. In trade, in banking, and also in politics, it will be found that the larger the number of persons interested in them, the greater is the security for all. Would that this great truth could be impressed on governments, in the management of Colonies!—but provinces are granted to individuals who allow the lands to remain deserts, and millions are doomed to perish, or wander over the earth in search of a resting place.

In confirmation of an extravagant and unscientific assignment of the public lands in British Colonies, it is only necessary to state, that in the Canadas, at the Cape of Good Hope, and in the Australian Colonies, without taking

in New Zealand, there are upwards of seventy-eight millions of acres, granted almost without valuable consideration. It is to be particularly noticed, that that vast territory assigned to a comparatively small number of individuals, is all picked land, of good quality, and in the most favourable situations as respects water and other advantages. The area of Great Britain and Ireland, with the adjacent islands, including mountains, lakes and rivers, and sterile land, is only about seventy-seven millions and a half of acres. The proportion of population to gross numbers of acres in the year 1841, was as follows:—

Average of England, about $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres for each soul		
„	Wales, about $5\frac{1}{2}$	„
„	Scotland, about $7\frac{1}{2}$	„
„	Ireland about $2\frac{1}{8}$	„

The argument incessantly urged by the favourers of colonization is, that the waste lands are for homes for our overplus population ; but this over-abundant population is not treated fairly, as it finds a third party standing between it and the state, as the owner and lord of the public lands. With such resources as Great Britain possesses, it is a melancholy thing to say, that our emigrant farmers, and hardy labourers, will find a system established in the United States of North America, under which they will experience more attention to their necessities.*

* Now, that the question respecting the frontier line between the British settlements of New Brunswick, and the North-eastern States of the North American Republic, has been settled by treaty, it may be stated, that the delay and the uncertainty for fifty years have preserved about ten millions of good land from having been granted in the usual grasping manner of English ministers. In this view, it is a happy thing that the lands have been retained for the use of hard-working agriculturists, whether American or British, rather than fall into the idle hands of court favourites, or of the unenterprising poor cousins of secretaries of state. Do not suppose that

As the author of these pages has bestowed a good deal of attention on our systems of colonization, he cannot resist offering a few remarks whenever the subject presents itself. As the matter comes in the way, the people of this country may be reminded that they have just been charged with a debt of three hundred thousand pounds, incurred in the foundation and gross mismanagement of a colony planted in Australia so late as the year 1835.*

this idea is an idle imagination. The whole of the lands in Prince Edward's Island, in the neighbourhood of New Brunswick were granted away in one day to seventy-five grantees. The quantity of public land thus spoliated was 1,457,209 acres.

"The whole of the land was granted in one day to absentee proprietors upon terms which have never been fulfilled."—*Lord Durham's Report on the Canadas*, p. 14.

The whole sum received for the lands was £731.

* Refer for particulars to the proceedings in the House of Commons, in the month of July 1842.—"The Mother-country was charged with a debt of £300,000, and with 20,000 a year for the maintenance of paupers in the colony of South Australia, founded on what are called the '*Wakefield principles*!' "—Among the millions voted to be charged on the impoverished people of this country, by forty-five or fifty men, who go through the farce of legislation between *sleeping and waking*, there are few items which contain more secret history than the above-mentioned sum of £300,000!

CHAP. IX.

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

THE DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLE OF THE ASSIGNMENT OF PUBLIC LANDS IS FORMING A NATIONAL CHARACTER WHICH COMBINES THE SUTLETY OF THE JEWISH AND THE ENERGY OF THE ROMAN.

THERE is one nation in the world, that, under our own observation, is advancing by gigantic strides to population, wealth, and power. This nation is the United States of North America; and if the cause of this extraordinary progress be sought for, it will be found in the mode of the assignment of the public lands to the people. Without having copied the laws of the ancient Jewish or Roman legislators, the Americans adopted the principles of them so far in their land-regulations, as to offer to every man, on equitable conditions, as much land as the circumstances of his family demand.

By the law of Moses, the lands were divided among all the citizens, with the exception of the priesthood, in proportion to their families, and by this plan the means of subsistence were provided, and the principle of equality was recognized, for all. Perhaps it was even compulsory on the Israelites, to occupy and cultivate the farms assigned to them.

By the laws of the United States, there is no division of the lands made among the citizens, but the principle on

which they are based, is the possession to every individual disposed to occupy and cultivate the land, to the extent of his ability, on reasonable terms of price and tenure. There is no compulsion and no restraint, but the famous pre-emption law encourages the settlement of deserving cultivators on small quantities of land, to form homes for their families, and it discourages the acquisition of large tracts of land by single persons. The pioneers of the wilderness are guaranteed, at a moderate price, the fee simple of the lands which they may reclaim from the wildness of nature.

This unfolds the sources of North American power and greatness; and, since the destruction of the British aristocratic domination, the advance made has been altogether marvellous, not only from the natural increase of the population, but from the additions by foreigners, attracted by the wisdom and impartiality of the laws of the assignment of the public lands.

“We hold out to the people of other countries, an invitation to come and settle among us, as members of our rapidly-growing family; and, for the blessings which we offer them, we require them to look upon our country as their country, and to unite with us in the task of preserving our institutions, and thereby perpetuating our liberties.”*

The population of the United States, at the Treaty of Independence, was about three millions of souls, being about the number of the Jews on entering into the Holy Land; and now, at the end of sixty years, a country, from having been a colony, oppressed and insulted by a dominant party in Great Britain, has, without hyperbole, become an empire, destined to exercise a powerful influence in the affairs of the world.

Let the United States husband their public lands, for

* President's Message, June 1, 1841.

the use, and for homes, of generations yet unborn ; and let facilities of settlement be continued at a natural price—in contempt of the theories of European colonizers ; and, on the truth of all history, their prosperity, power, and influence will extend through countless ages.

In the year 1840, their population was 17,068,000, and the quantity of grain of all kinds raised, was 615,515,000 bushels—confirming the truth of the observation made three thousand years before, “*That there is much Food in the tillage of the Poor!*” *

* Proverbs.

CHAP. X.

THE CONNECTION BETWEEN SEVERE TAXATION AND THE DECLINE OR REVOLUTION OF NATIONS.

PART I.

ILLUSTRATIONS FROM GENERAL HISTORY.—THE CRUSADES.—THE DARK AGES.
. —A FEW HISTORICAL EVENTS CITED AT RANDOM.

To the political philosopher, the moralist, and the romancer, the characters and events described in the pages of history, afford subjects for their respective studies and pursuits. But, for the great mass of mankind, those pages bear the record of deeds of violence, and acts of oppression, practised on the inhabitants of the nations of the earth.

Men in society, in every age, have presented the appearance of the ocean—ever in a state of oscillation—alternating between the hurricane, the breeze, and the calm.

After the transactions of all history have been divested of the pomp and circumstance attendant on war and diplomacy, and of the tinsel of courts and their intrigues, and when laid bare to the observation of men, they will be found to present cupidity on the part of rulers, and efforts of the governed to save themselves from being made victims to the covetous principle.

An attempt has been made in other branches of this work to show that political, and, to a certain extent,

spiritual dominion, rest on the control of the subsistence of the people subject to the power; and various examples, deduced from history, were cited to establish the position.

In this section the reverse of the picture will be shown; from which it will be discerned, that the overstretch of the power thus acquired, bursts for a time the bonds of society, which is thereby changed in its form, and balance of interests.

The action on society is the cupidity of sovereigns, princes, aristocracies, and dominations of all kinds; and the counteraction, is the resistance made by the subjects exposed to the severity of the exactions. The first is Power in all its degrees, up to the maximum of fiscal despotism; the second is Revolution, in all its forms of overwhelming violence, or of regulated popular force. This is describing the two great antagonist principles in the public affairs of mankind, in terms which admit of no compromise, and which will, no doubt, shock many persons by their very harshness. But there is no help for this. What history has written, down to the present age, cannot be altered—it will stand for ever: and the more deeply that its affairs be analyzed, the more striking will the truth of the description appear. The ambition of monarchs and of warriors—the loves, the jealousies, and revenges of the inmates of palaces—the schemes and tricks of statesmen—are only episodes in the great drama.* Society has been ever moved and agitated by those two antagonist powers, which are employed by an overruling Providence, as instru-

* History, as it has been written heretofore, is like those accounts of travellers, which are filled with the personal narratives of adventures, instead of descriptions of the soil, state of agriculture, manufactures, trade, religion, laws, and customs of the inhabitants of the country through which the traveller passes.

ments in his direction of human affairs, to some ultimate design of wisdom and beneficence. Oppression forces on the calm of misery—Revolution upheaves the elements of society, and moulds them into new forms. Such has been the case throughout the world—like the flux and reflux of the tides of the ocean, or of the currents which move its waters, and prevent their stagnation and corruption.

Taxation, unjust in its principles and severe in its pressure, has led to the greatest revolutions which ever agitated the world, and which in their consequences are felt in some way or other, by every individual at present living in Europe and America. It is perfectly marvellous to think on, how small a thing should produce such tremendous effects. Small pieces of coin, like sparks struck from the adamant of taxation, falling on the inflammable materials in human society, have physically and morally set the world in flames;—morally, by the excitement and ardour of men's minds—and physically, by the fire of battles, and the blaze of burning fleets, towns, and villages. Nor need this create wonder, for we perceive precisely similar effects produced in the operations of nature. The ignition, or sudden expansion, of gases beneath the surface of the earth, will cause an earthquake which may overturn mountains and overwhelm cities;—the electric fluid, the most subtle of substances, will rend whatever is opposed to it;—the massy trunks of the forest-trees which cover a whole continent, have sprung from small seeds dropped into the ground.

Political oppression, tyranny, despotism, and such like expressions, mean nothing more or less than the privations, discomforts, and dangers, to which men are exposed, by having their substance, or materials of living, curtailed, or, in the extreme case, reduced to less than will support life. When one nation subjects another nation, the first will

perhaps be satisfied with the payment of a tribute or periodical subsidy from the latter.* The conquered people were allowed in many cases, to manage their own affairs, on the condition of delivering annually a sum of money, or, among pastoral tribes, a certain number of cattle and sheep. In modern times, among civilized people, there is nothing so sacredly guarded as the sovereignty of the nation. This is shown in the sensitiveness of any affront to the national ensign, and wo befall that people that allows this symbol of power to be upheld by hands too feeble or treacherous to save its honour from the audacity of an aggressor.

When the oppression of the governing power becomes too heavy on a people, and reduces their means of subsistence, the nature of the race, and their inherent qualities, decide the issue. Some nations do not possess the energy to resist the pressure, but sink under the burden, and in a few generations show only a remnant of miserable beings crawling on the surface.

A great part of Asia presents melancholy proofs of the decay of nations, that were in former ages populous and powerful. In many parts of America, particularly in Guatemala, there are the ruins of large cities buried in the forests, with other imperishable monuments of nations—the very people of which have become extinct. But the nations of northern Europe are composed of more stubborn materials, and, like the palm-tree, rise from the earth, and spread their branches above the weights which are suspended from them. The inhabitants of the Dutch Nether-

* "Jotham fought with the king of the Ammonites, and prevailed against them. And the children of Ammon gave him the same year an hundred talents of silver, and ten thousand measures of wheat, and ten thousand of barley. So much did the children of Ammon pay unto him, both the second year and the third year."—2 Chronicles, xxvii.

lands, in throwing off the yoke of Spain in the sixteenth century, exhibited to the world an example of extraordinary power in the union and calm resolution of small communities against the mightiest nation of Europe. A people united, and determined to free themselves, are certain of gaining their objects. A people of this energetic cast of frame will endure the extremity of distress, before they rouse themselves to sweep off the authors of their misery; but sooner or later they will move, and rise with a shout that will be heard round the globe. The French nation is a living example, in illustration of what is here stated. The constitutional temperament of a people has much to do in these matters.

Coolness of temper and mental reflection will lead some people to contend for a principle, and calmly proceed to arm themselves for its support and practical application. John Hampden, as representing the English people, deliberately brought the question of illegal taxation to an issue, on his refusal to pay the amount of twenty shillings, demanded of him by a king, who wished to rule with a vigour beyond the law. He calmly appealed to his country, and roused it to resist the unjust claim: the country responded to his call, and a great revolution was the consequence.

The people of the British American colonies, stung by the injustice offered them by a dominant party in the mother-country, pledged their property, and perilled their lives, in a struggle with a powerful nation, on a question of a demand of three-pence of duty on a pound of tea. They fought, and achieved their independence; and this marks an era in the history of mankind. It is not without its use to state these changes in terms, to show at a glance the origin, progress, and end of great revolutions.

On the authority of history, unjust taxation irritates a people into violent measures ; and cruel exactions justify revolutions.—They are cause and effect, and the relation is preserved by the Governor of all created beings.

When one considers by centuries, the great events in the history of the world, and connects them together in groups, it is remarkable how closely they appear related ; and in taking this view of them, and beginning with the outbreak under John Hampden, it will not perhaps be mere fancy to trace the connecting links from that event, to the consolidation of oligarchical power under George the Third, to the American war undertaken to crush the liberties of a great portion of British citizens, and to the revolution and independence of the North American States. Again, from that revolution was carried the torch that lit up in France the funeral pile of a defunct system of corruption—then followed the crash of thrones in all the kingdoms of Europe, save two—and kings became wanderers amidst the crowds of cities, or captives at the chariot-wheels of Napoleon. All Europe was convulsed, and all the nations of the earth looked on and trembled. Spain was torn up, and again cast down ; and those vast regions of America, which she presumptuously claimed as her own, shook off the chains that bound them, and sprang into an independent existence.

The world was moved to its centre, and presents in the present day a new aspect, from the mighty revolution which issued from one great movement of the British race of people. Well may a man be proud of the British or Irish name, when he reflects on the powerful influence which it has pleased Almighty God to give to the people that bear it, over the destiny of the world ! Let foreign nations, who begin to raise the heel, and turn round in an attitude as if

to trample on this country, first count the cost to themselves of their daring designs ; and, on the other hand, let the aristocratic party of this nation weigh its own fate in the balance, should perseverance in oppressive and unjust measures force the people to rouse themselves, and in the triumph of their own victory, to raise the shout of freedom from tyranny in all the nations of the earth. And let the sovereign of this great empire remember, and let her tell it to her children, and let her children tell it to another generation, that she occupies the throne of these realms, and bears the sceptre, by virtue of a title derived from a revolution which issued out of an attempt of a former monarch to lay an unconstitutional tax on the people.

As these historical sketches are not arranged chronologically, but are selected merely to illustrate the connection between partial and cruel taxation, and the revolutions to which it leads, the following instances are adduced ; and in bringing the Crusades to bear on the subject, it will be admitted that no more important event can be selected since the Christian era.

In the year 1096, the first of those extraordinary expeditions marched from Europe for Palestine, and the ninth and last of them departed in 1271 ; and in 1291, the final ruin of the European cause in the Holy Land, was effected by the recapture, by the Saracens, of the important fortress of Acre. Thus, for the space of about two hundred years, every country and state of Europe, from Sweden and Denmark, Scotland and Ireland, to Spain and Italy, poured forth their population, to fall by the sword of the infidels, or perish of hunger and thirst, or by pestilence, on the soil of Syria. It is calculated that about 2,000,000 of persons perished in these wild enterprises.

Before tracing the causes of, and motives for, the Crusades

some of the consequences which ensued from them will first be noticed.

Perhaps the advantages which have been attributed to the intercourse with the East have been overrated, in considering the condition of Europe during the progress and after the cessation of the religious wars. The importation into the countries of Europe of the plunder of the East, certainly did not replace the wealth that was carried out of them for the prosecution of those wars; and the use of luxuries, not before known, and an improvement in manners, did not compensate for an increased ferocity of disposition acquired in such fanatical struggles. However, the common opinion is, that the civilization of Europe was advanced by the warlike intercourse for two centuries with the East. And it is supposed, that literature and refinement of taste were introduced from that part of the world. The various orders of military knights, half priests half soldiers, had their origin in the expeditions of the Crusades. The immense wealth of those orders excited the cupidity of the kings of France and other countries; and the vicious lives and supposed dangerous designs of the members of those secret societies, formed a plea for their suppression, and for the confiscation of their property.

One circumstance which always produces a deep impression on society, occurred during the progress of the Crusades; and that was, a pretty general transfer of property, in order to raise funds for the fitting out of the expeditions. Lands, houses, and moveable property, frequently changed hands, and the wealth of the church was augmented during the process. Indeed, the Crusades were so profitable to the coffers of the holy church, that several popes stimulated, by every means, kings, princes, and people, to carry them on. The English were beset by the emissaries from Rome,

but were persuaded in vain "to commute their piety into gold." In fine, the condition of the common people was not improved, nor was the tyranny of the aristocracy broken, by the holy wars. However, there can be no doubt of the public mind, throughout Europe, having been heated and strongly excited by the extraordinary military, and partly commercial, enterprises of the Crusades. And this mental activity, nurtured by the knowledge derived from expeditions undertaken by men into the interior of Asia, gradually increased by what it fed on, and ended in those glorious discoveries, of America by Columbus, and of the doubling of the Cape of Good Hope by Vasco de Gama. And these two important discoveries taking place about the same time, changed the destiny of the world.

The demand for shipping, for the conveyance of men and horses to the Holy Land during the Crusades, called into existence the fleets of Genoa, Marseilles, and Venice, and the commerce of those towns was extended to all parts of the shores of the Mediterranean sea. The principles of the maritime law, at present in force in Europe, were established in the thirteenth century, by the commercial cities of the Mediterranean. The important principle that the flag covers the merchandise, and that, during war, private property on board of vessels should be protected, was established by the municipality of Marseilles. The very forms of the charter-parties, now in use in the sea-ports of Great Britain, were taken from the contracts entered into with Genoa, to convey troops, pilgrims, and goods to the ports of Syria.

To a manufacturing and commercial people like the British, the revolutions of the Crusades have been of the greatest importance, as they have, more than any other nation, profited by the new channels of navigation and

trade to the East and West, opened since the fifteenth century.

When all these circumstances are considered—when the extension of geographical knowledge is taken into account—when the mind dwells on the consequences which have resulted from the discovery of America, and the transplanting, to that quarter of the world, of the *sugar-cane* and the *coffee plant*, first brought to the knowledge of Europe by the Crusaders—and, above all, when one reflects on the reformation of religion, and the other changes in Germany, France, and England, which followed that event, the mind is impressed by the stupendous importance of the revolution of the Crusades, to which all the extraordinary events referred to can be directly or indirectly traced. So important have those enterprises been in their results, that almost every writer on the history, politics, morals, jurisprudence, and manners of Europe, since the thirteenth century, has delighted to expatiate on them. But it has been remarked, that, contrary to what happens in most military enterprises of great pith, they did not form at the time the subjects of romance or poetry. Probably there was too much of the *reality* of horrors and misery of every kind, to allow any scope to the imagination.

Having briefly noticed the events which issued out of the Crusades, it will now be necessary to go back to the cause which led to them, and it is very instructive to find that *taxation* was the spark that ignited the inflammable materials of the whole of Europe. A poll-tax of one bezant, a gold coin of uncertain value,* imposed on pilgrims entering the holy city of Jerusalem, roused the pity and indignation of all Christendom, for great numbers of pious persons reduced

* The value of it is supposed to have been about equal to twenty shillings sterling.

to the extremity of misery, and even torture, by the infidels, in consequence of their inability to satisfy the demand made on them. And, when the cruelties inflicted on the pilgrims by the Mahommedan barbarians had reached their height ; an extraordinary man, of ardent temperament, of pious zeal, and possessed of that species of eloquence suited to the age, and to the minds that he addressed, preached the deliverance of the Christians, and the liberation of the Holy Land from the exactions and power of the infidels. The Pope took up the cause ; and the kings, and princes, and the armed population of every country, assembled at the call to carry the cross to Mount Calvary. Now were presented the most extraordinary spectacles which the world ever saw : all Europe poured forth its inhabitants from the plains, the mountains, and glens of every country ; “the people were turned from intestine discord to foreign war, from dull superstition to furious zeal.” Men, who had never met but as mortal foes, now rushed forth to fight side by side in the same cause. The expeditions, which followed each other under various leaders, were in numbers more like the armed migrations of nations, than armies equipped for battle.

From ignorance of the countries through which they marched, and from deficiency of provisions, the severest hardships were endured ; and in the first Crusade, out of 800,000 men, women, and children, who departed from Europe, only about 40,000 encamped before the walls of Jerusalem.

But it is foreign to the design of this notice, to go into details of the Crusades : the object is to illustrate the effects of cruel taxation. One great passion moved the millions who rushed to the plains of Palestine ; but, mixed with that, there were other strong impulses and fierce emotions. Fanaticism and superstition were stirred

by the excitement of adventure, and by the desire for military renown, and the hopes of being able to avenge on the head of the unbeliever, the cruelties inflicted on the Christian, occasionally soothed the soul of the stern Crusader. But cupidity and avarice never lost their power from first to the last of the crusading expeditions. The active minds of the popes and clergy, who kept alive, for so many generations, the crusading disposition, had their attention always fixed upon the accumulation of property in the church; and the rapacity was at times carried to such lengths, as to defeat its own end by the disgust which it created among the laity.—On the other hand, the rapacious barons, with armed hand, at times relieved the church of its superfluous wealth. In several countries of Europe, a projected crusading expedition was almost an excuse for levying a tax on the people. In England a tax of 10 per cent on real and moveable property, called Saladin's tax, was levied by Henry II. And Richard the First, that romantic warrior but blood-thirsty savage, expended every shilling that he could raise in the Crusade, on the return from which he was made prisoner, and entailed such a heavy expense on his subjects for his ransom.

Fortunately for mankind, the credit or funding system was unknown in those ages, otherwise nations, for centuries afterwards, might have been called to pay interest on debts incurred to set up a gothic king on the throne of Jerusalem. But to Richard of England is due the merit, of having settled, by treaty with Saladin, the exemption of the people of the West from all taxes on making the pilgrimage to the holy sepulchre. This took place in the year 1191, about a hundred years after the first Crusade.

About this period, the spirit of crusading was becoming weak, and people were more and more reluctant to respond

to the calls of the pope and their kings to raise funds ;—taxation cooled zeal: but as the fifth Crusade was led against Constantinople, which it carried by assault, and plundered of its immense wealth, the hope of pillage revived the religious desire to secure possession of the Holy Land ; and for ninety years longer, the Aristocracies of Germany, of France, and of England, were rivals for the possession of the prize.*

The many centuries emphatically called the dark ages, were a period of darkness that might be felt. The only light that was perceived through the gloom, was the flickering rays from monasteries, reflected on the strongholds of robber-chiefs. Cupidity unrestrained, save by the danger of dividing the spoil, seized, throughout the greater part of Europe, the goods of every one not under the protection of a powerful chief. The bodies and souls of men were retained in pledge; the first enslaved by an armed power, and the latter kept in bondage by priests, who asserted an influence beyond the grave.

The law of the first-born, and the law of mortmain, though contradictory in their terms, agreed in securing to a barbarous Aristocracy, property and power acquired by

* It is not possible for the mind of a man, living in the present age, to conceive what would have been now the state of Europe, and of the world at large, had the Crusades not been undertaken. If the authorities, under whose power Palestine lay, had perceived their true interests, and had they encouraged pilgrimizing Europe, by consistent hospitality to the pilgrims, and protection to their property, instead of cruelly oppressing the devotees, and rousing the indignation and enterprising energies of the inhabitants of Europe, by the exaction of heavy taxes, the human mind would have remained in the sleep of the dark ages, and, at this day, dreams would have stupified the souls of men. But the world seems to be governed by an overruling Providence, through the cupidity and passions of men, as instruments to effect his purposes.

violence ; and to a spiritual power, the accumulation of wealth gained by deception, or wrung from the remorse and fears of the dying sinner. On these two laws, as far as law was acknowledged, rested the system of temporal and spiritual dominion. Poverty, wretchedness, and gross ignorance were the lot and inheritance of the people, who occasionally in desperation broke out into revolt against their oppressors. Every country of Europe can furnish examples of scenes of violence and rapine by the chiefs, and of insurrection by the enslaved people. But it is not necessary to adduce here more than the rising of the French peasantry, about the middle of the fourteenth century. "The unfortunate cultivators of the soil sowed in fear, and reaped with pain ; and in many places, ills more burdensome than human nature could bear, ground the labourer to the earth."* The consequence was, that they rose against the nobles, and, in the fury of revenge, massacred and destroyed for a while all that fell in their way. After the insurrection was put down, and numbers of the peasants were taken prisoners, and examined, the only reason that they could give for their rising was, that "*they were miserable !*" Had Caillet, the leader of the peasants, been able to have restrained them from committing excesses, and had he succeeded in uniting them, to secure a charter of freedom, he would have appeared, in history, the Tell or the Bruce of his country. What a lesson to governments ! and what a responsibility falls on them, if they despise it ! The laws of a country are oppressive, when the great mass of the population are miserable, and driven into tumults.

But it takes centuries before nations, or their rulers, whether regal or aristocratic, will learn wisdom.

The insurrection of the Jacquerie took place in the

* James's Jacquerie.

year 1358; and in 1766 an insurrection of nearly a similar nature broke out in Bohemia and Hungary. The cultivators of the soil of those countries were ground down by severe exactions. They chiefly held their lands on the condition of giving three or four days' labour in the week to the landlords. This was equivalent to about fifty per cent. of the gross produce of the land as rent. The cultivators were very unhappy, and were at times dependent on the owners of the land for corn, to be replaced from the next harvest; they held their lands at the pleasure of their lords. A people, in such a miserable condition are driven to extremities, either by their own misery—or they become tools, and are instigated to violence by bad men for political purposes. The peasants of Bohemia were almost universally in a state of insurrection, and they menaced with massacre the nobility and rich proprietors; and it required an army of 28,000 men from the Austrian government, before tranquillity was restored.

This popular movement will perhaps be represented in general history as an effort to murder proprietors, and plunder property, for the mere love of violence—it will probably be held forth, as an instance of the disposition innate in a multitude to cruel and destructive measures. But, before a verdict be pronounced, let men reflect on circumstances. Between man and man in a court of justice, is there no allowance made for provocation by one of them for the violent assault of the other? Provoking words, or even looks, may, in the mind of a judge, palliate or justify a blow. It is a terrible thing when a people rise up, as one man, to take vengeance in their own hands: but men are not brutes, to remain for ever submissive, and devour the garbage that is thrown down to them, but they are beings with many good qualities, and some bad ones; and if the former be more cultivated, and less apprehension

entertained of the latter, the world would go on without insurrections or wars. "It is the oppressor who has made man fit only for the yoke."

But coming down to the present day, there is the hope of melioration for the descendants of the men whom misery drove into violence seventy years before.

It would appear that the principles of an Agrarian law have been established in Transylvania, and also the recognition of civil rights to the inhabitants of that country. It was declared "that every man ought to participate in the general affairs of the common country—" that in future every man, whether noble or not, shall be entitled to acquire and possess landed property"—"that every man shall have the right of instituting legal proceedings"—"that the peasants shall be held qualified to dispose freely of any property acquired by them"—"that the power of inflicting corporal punishment shall be entirely withdrawn from the lord of the soil."* These are most valuable concessions to a portion of the Austrian population, and will remind the Briton of the law of Magna Charta, and of the law which removed the restriction on his ancestor from the possession of lands and other property.

Throughout the whole of the world, nations are struggling to free themselves from fiscal oppression, and therefore to secure to the inhabitants political liberty, and civilization. In the present year, 1842, we have seen France nearly thrown into convulsion by the strict exaction of taxes by the government.† And in Mexico a change of political power has been effected by one party that took its

* This is copied from the *Atlas* newspaper of 24th Sept. 1842 ; extracted from some German paper.

† This refers to the state of high excitement approaching in several districts to insurrectionary outbreaks of the population, in consequence of the rigour exercised by the government in the collecting of certain taxes.

stand on a reform of the system of levying duties on commodities.

Spain has been repeatedly appealed to, in the course of this work, for examples to illustrate the fatal consequences of a policy opposed to the interests of a country, and unsuited to the genius of its inhabitants; and as a confirmation of the truth of the observations made, the following picture of the state of that interesting country in 1842, drawn by the deputation of Cadiz, is given:—"The evils experienced by the Spanish people from time immemorial, have proceeded from their imperfect economical or fiscal laws. These laws have actually dried up the proper sources of public wealth; have kept the government in constant distress and difficulties; and multiplied contributions and taxes to such an extent, that it may be said that the tree of wealth has been actually cut down in order to gather its fruits. And all this, for what end? That the cotton manufacturers of Catalonia may thrive, and that smugglers may seize upon the revenues belonging of right to the Treasury, and the commerce of the country perish. The same line of inquiry and reflection will cause you to observe, that agriculture, the great fountain of national wealth and prosperity, is being borne down by the superabundance of its own productions, because our fiscal laws prevent their exportation, and induce foreign nations to deal only with those, where they find that just and salutary commercial reciprocity which is denied them by the laws of Spain."*

Such is the present condition of a nation that once had the Netherlands under its dominion, that once threatened England with invasion, and that in the pride of empire assumed titles and prerogatives, which could only be sur-

* See Circular addressed by the deputation of Cadiz to the provincial deputations of Spain, dated 21 May, 1842.—*Times*, 24th June.

passed by those of Asiatic pretension. And yet the Spaniards, in all ages, have performed heroic exploits. About thirty years ago, the defence of Saragoza was worthy of a patriotic people resolved to die at their post; and about two thousand years before that event, the fate of Numantia was calculated to awe the world, by the spectacle of the inhabitants and defenders of a city preferring to perish voluntarily, rather than fall into the hands of the Romans who besieged them. Numantia, indeed, put at defiance the whole power of that conquering people.

A sketch of the history of the Roman people has been already given with considerable detail, but, in illustration of the subject treated of in this section, an event that happened about a hundred years before the siege of Numantia, will be referred to.

This event was the irruption of the Gauls into Italy, about 225 years before the Christian era,—an event that carried consternation to Rome itself, and showed how dangerous it was for one people to exercise harsh measures towards another. It would appear, that a certain tract of country was rented or leased of the Roman people by the Gauls for the use of their flocks and herds. That a law was enacted by the senate, that the lands thus conditionally assigned should be withdrawn, and distributed amongst Roman colonists.

This attempt to deprive them of the lands united the Gauls in a common cause, and they took up arms, crossed the Appenine mountains, and carried the war so as to threaten the capital. The Romans were so alarmed, that they called out all the men capable of bearing arms, and they assembled, to about the number of seven hundred thousand.

About the time that the barbarians rushed like a torrent

through Italy, Hannibal led his legions over the Alps, and carried for a season victory in his march. But a people like the Romans, with every freeman possessed of some title to his native soil, might lose battles, but could not be subdued, and they triumphed over their fierce and inveterate foes.

The observations as yet made in this section, have failed very much in their object, if the following positions have not been established by them :

That taxation, or the encroachment on a people's means of subsistence, if unjust in principle, partial in distribution, or severe in pressure, will cause a high-spirited and enlightened people to bring the question to issue by an appeal to arms—will, in other circumstances, force a nation to rise up, and, under the influence of distress, burst forth into violence, and overturn the very fabric of society—will, among a people of disjointed materials, and of deficient energy, act like a curse on the soil, so as “to cause the tree to be cut down for its fruit,”—will, among a fierce and barbarous people, rouse the passions of fanaticism and revenge, and spread fire and sword wherever defenceless men and women are to be found as victims.

As practical lessons are designed by these notices, it will be well to take one from the terrible calamity that befell the British arms in Cabul, where the barbarous tribes were roused, to overwhelm in slaughter an entire army, because our government in India thought proper to withhold a tribute which it had stipulated to pay to the chiefs of the tribes that caused such disasters.*

* Since the above was written, the British Army has evacuated Afghanistan, after having released the prisoners who were kept under the power of the native chiefs, and restored them to their country.

PART II.

PASSAGES FROM ENGLISH HISTORY, PREVIOUS TO THE REVOLUTION OF 1688,
ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE HARSH NATURE OF TAXATION STIMULATING THE
NATIONAL CHARACTER.

IN another branch of this work, a sketch is given of the progress of fiscal despotism in this country, from the reign of Charles the First down to the alteration, in 1842, of the tariff, and the imposition of a tax on the income of the industrious citizen. In this section, a few passages from English history, previous to the civil wars which led to the Revolution of 1688, will be adduced, in order to show how taxation stimulates society.

The Roman period was one of iron rule, and was characterized by the dead calm of a province of a powerful empire, or only disturbed by the inroads of barbarous tribes. The persons and properties of the inhabitants were completely at the mercy of the conquerors. The abandonment of the country by the Romans in the fifth century, was the signal for a domestic struggle among the various tribes or nations of the island, and for an irruption of Saxons, Danes, and other races, from the neighbouring continent. The Danish invaders were the most ruthless in their exactions, as they appeared, in their fiscal character, to possess hearts of flint and arms of iron ; and they imposed a land-tax, to which history and tradition have given the odious name of "Dane-gelt." The object of those ferocious hordes, was rather to overrun and plunder the country, than to seize and settle on its lands.

Alfred was a king raised to make head against them, but his romantic and glorious career was insufficient to turn them off from the shores of the island.

The annals of the country, from the departure of the Romans to the descent of William of Normandy, tell the tale, oft repeated, of the imposition of harsh taxation, and of outbreak and insurrection of the people.

The inhabitants were divided into two classes—freemen and slaves—both exposed to the taxing power.

In those rude times, any symptom of civilization, and love of the arts of peace, that appears, is hailed with satisfaction in the present age:—such as the law of Athelstan, for the promotion of commerce, by raising every merchant who had made three voyages of trade, to the rank of noble.

A few years before the Conquest, there occurred an incident, that displayed the powerful effect which the extreme misery of the people produced on the mind of Godiva, the queen of the country. This misery was caused by the excessive taxation imposed by her despotic husband, and so roused her sympathy as to make her sacrifice herself by riding naked through the town, as the condition, or penance, fixed by the tyrant, for redeeming the people from their miseries; and how terrible this state of affairs must have been, thus to overcome, in the mind of the noble Godiva, the feelings of female modesty!

This abjectness of condition of the people, produced by the fiscal power, and the ignorance caused by the spiritual dominion of a corrupt priesthood, prepared the way for the advance of the Norman and his relentless followers, to the possession of the property, and to the command over the lives, of all orders and classes of men in the country. From these two circumstances, can also be accounted for, the ease with which any determined band or horde of foreign barbarians could overrun and occupy the soil.

This may be the proper place to refer to the humiliating fact, established by the history of the British Islands, that

a foreign enemy once landed on their shores in such force as to maintain his ground, has always either subdued the inhabitants first settled, or established himself in an independent position. The Roman conquest is not particularly adduced as a case in point, because that people were so infinitely superior to the natives in military power and discipline, and in the knowledge of the arts of peace, and science of government, that their conquest and occupation of the country were similar to proceedings in the present day, of white men armed with the musket against naked and almost defenceless savages. But the wonder is, to see tribes of mixed races come over from the opposite shores of Germany, Denmark, Holland, and France, and take the country from the hands of inhabitants, of the same stamina and courage as themselves; for, man to man, the British islands have always reared a people equal to any race of men on the earth. This is a very interesting subject of inquiry, but there is no space here to go into it, and all that can be attempted is, to point to the peculiar condition of the society, arising from the insular nature of the territory.

In ancient times, when there was little commercial intercourse with foreign nations, facilities were afforded to the chiefs exercising the military and political power, to curb their subjects, deprived of every chance of getting foreign aid, or of escaping to foreign countries. An enemy making a descent on an island does so at great advantage; he has the excitement of an assailant, and dashes on with high hopes and spirits. The attack is necessarily a sudden one, if winds and weather be at all favourable to the enterprise, and it may be made on a point where the inhabitants are taken by surprise, and perhaps beaten and dispersed in considerable force. In all attacks from seaward on a people, a sudden surprise is a victory, which, promptly followed

up, may lead to the most decisive results. An insular people naturally confide in the security of their position, and are therefore thrown off their guard by the unexpected appearance of a foreign enemy on their shores. A people with a land-frontier against an enemy, can always have their eye directed to the points of danger, and be ready to defend them.

The last time that Great Britain saw and heard the confusion and uproar of battle within her borders, was within these last hundred years; and the proceedings of the Pretender, in the year 1745, throw a fearful interest on this subject. Although the rebellion was expected by the government to break out, the country was so completely taken by surprise by the flash of arms, that had the Pretender to the crown acted more like a soldier, and pushed his advantages, instead of wasting time in the mummeries of royalty in the palace at Edinburgh, there is little doubt that he could have marched into the capital itself, and seized the treasury of the kingdom. As it was, he penetrated into England, notwithstanding the distracted nature of his own military counsels, which brought on the ruin of his cause. The real defenders of a country are its inhabitants, and not foreign armies: but if the mass of the population be slaves, or in circumstances of extreme misery, perhaps they will view the yoke of a foreigner preferable to the grinding power of domestic tyrants. Prince Charles, in his manifesto to the inhabitants of Great Britain and Ireland, and to foreign states, urged as arguments for his cause, the oppressed state of the tenants of these countries, and the system of intimidation and bribery practised at elections of members of the legislature. From this digression let us go back to ancient times.

As William held out to the French the spoils of England

as the reward of conquest, it is not to be wondered that he conquered the country. But the re-establishment of the hateful tax of Danegelt, and other exactions, roused the patient Saxons; and his power, though so great, was at times in danger of being overthrown by the insurrections which broke out in various districts. The country was at length quieted, rather by the extermination than the subjection of the people of the disturbed districts.

The weak and unprincipled Stephen, in order to secure his usurped throne, made concessions to the clergy and the nobility, which enabled them still farther to oppress the miserable inhabitants. As Danegelt was a tax on land, it was abolished for ever, to satisfy the two powerful orders.

The taxes raised during the reign of the crusading Richard, went abroad to defray the expense of his expeditions, or to ransom him from the power of his enemy.

The existing and all future generations of Britons ought to read with grateful fervour the records of the taxes imposed by the cruel, cowardly, and licentious tyrant, John—for, to the effects from those taxes they are indebted, under the direction of Providence, for the great charter of their liberties. The history of the brief and troubled reign of that weak and violent person, is just an account of acts of rapacity and confiscation of lands and property belonging to the barons, clergy, and of every individual possessed of anything worth seizing. He made a traffic of every thing, and liberty and justice were sold as commodities in the market.

So universal was the detestation of John, that he could not trust his own subjects, but employed foreign mercenaries to execute his commands, and ravage the counties marked out for devastation. The consequences are too well known to need description.

The great charter was drawn up to secure something in favour of every class of the people, even down to the serf of the soil; and of so much importance was it considered by succeeding generations, that it was solemnly ratified thirty-five times, by various kings, within two hundred years from its first confirmation.*

The immense value of the great charter was experienced during the long reign of fifty-six years of the succeeding monarch, Henry III., as under him the Commons began to be a distinct and powerful body in the community; and they first assembled in a separate and independent chamber. In this reign, the first example was given of requiring a confirmation of the charter, before a grant of money should be given to the king.

But, notwithstanding all these precautions, it would appear, that between the sovereign of the country and the pope of Rome, both laity and clergy were exposed to severe exactions; and it was calculated that Italian priests derived from England, revenues about three times the amount of the revenue of the king. The Jews were deprived of a third of their treasures and effects, and in the following reign were banished from the kingdom. This reign is memorable for the introduction into use of coal, to which England has been indebted for so much of her greatness.

During the reign of the first three Edwards, comprising a period of one hundred and five years, the consequences of the great charter were more and more developed, and England rose in power and influence in proportion as the

* The original document, which ought to be preserved as a sacred national object, was described by a member of the House of Commons, on the 19th of July, 1842, "as being deposited in a glass-case in the British Museum, along with a pair of Esquimaux breeches!"

people advanced in wealth and intelligence ; but these two terms are taken relatively to the past, for a very wide gulf had yet to be crossed, to reach the improved condition of society in after ages. The capacity and active talents of the first and third Edward, contributed much to the improved state of the nation, but the heroic exertions of Robert Bruce, checked the designs and humbled the pride of the second Edward. Within this period of one hundred and five years, there were several laws passed, which produced important effects on the state of society, by their economic tendencies.

The first was, the enactment which checked the acquisition of property by the clergy, who basely took advantage of the ignorance of the people, and extorted from them grants of lands and houses, as the price of the pardon of their sins. The second was the law which laid the foundation of the entail of estates through a given line of successors: this may be denominated the foundation-stone of the colossus of aristocratic power in this kingdom.

But the most important law which was passed in the reign of Edward I. was that containing the principle "THAT NO TAX SHOULD BE LEVIED WITHOUT CONSENT OF THE KNIGHTS, CITIZENS, AND BURGESSES, ASSEMBLED IN PARLIAMENT." And to give effect to that important law, it was enacted in the following reign, that the king should hold a parliament "once a year, or twice if need be."

A great amount of confiscation was made by the seizure of all the lands, houses, and other properties, belonging to the Knights Templars. The pope was the great mover in this scheme of spoliation, and so enormous was the rapacity of his holiness, that his power became an object of jealousy ; and the English parliament, under Edward III., stated that the taxes levied by him were five times the

amount of those exacted by the king, and that every thing was venal at Rome. This monarch passed a statute excluding foreigners from ecclesiastical preferment, and reducing the papal authority in England; and the demand of the pope for the payment of the tribute granted by King John, was rejected by the king and parliament. In the latter part of the reign of Edward III., a tax of two shillings on every tun of wine, and sixpence in the pound of all merchandise, was imposed, for the protection of merchant ships and foreign trade. This was the origin of the famous tunnage and poundage duty, the illegal enactment of which by Charles I. produced such important results.*

About the middle of the fourteenth century, it would appear that the physical condition of labourers, notwithstanding the barbarity of the age, was superior to that of great masses at present in Great Britain. The sumptuary laws show this. Servants were not allowed to eat flesh or fish above once a day. If a labourer boarded with his master, one third of his wages was deducted as the price of his subsistence.† In the present day a labourer has to expend at least two-thirds of his hard-worn shilling on food alone!

Under the weak and unfortunate Richard II., (1377-1399,) rebellions of the nobles, and general insurrections of the people, followed harsh measures of appropriation and unequal taxation, as effects from causes. That monarch fell a victim to the usurper of his crown, and his ill-acquired treasures became the prize of the same successful adven-

* In 1340, Edward III. assumed the title of King of France, which was retained by the kings of Great Britain to the year 1815.

† This refers to the laws of Edward III., passed in 1349 and 1363, regulating the wages of labourers, and fixing the quality and quantity of clothing that they might wear.

turer. The tunnage and poundage taxes were doubled in this reign, but the exactions which marked it with such deeds of violence, were capitation-taxes, at first graduated to the rank and property of the citizens, but afterwards charged as a general poll-rate on all classes and ranks of the people, without distinction of sex, above fifteen years of age. Although the pillage and ruin, to which the labouring classes were exposed under their arbitrary government, were greatly distressing to them; still the harshness of the mode of levying the taxes exasperated their feelings.

An incident that occurred, roused the celebrated Walter Tyler, a tradesman in the town of Dartford, to take vengeance for an insulting rudeness to his daughter, committed by a ruffianly tax-gatherer, whom the enraged and indignant father cut down at one blow. This accident changed the position and character of Tyler, who found himself suddenly at the front of a vast multitude of armed followers, whom he led to London against the King and Aristocracy of his country. The demands which were made showed the advanced state of popular opinion in favour of civil liberty, and a charter was granted by King Richard, declaratory of the freedom of the insurgents, and of the abolition of all servitude and villanage. A great popular revolution, which would have changed the destiny of England, was on the point of completion, when it was checked and smothered by circumstances of a personal nature. In an interview between Richard and Tyler, the latter became excited, on the King hesitating to pronounce the abolition of the forest and game laws, whereupon Walworth, the mayor of London, suspecting the intentions of the popular leader, struck him to the heart with his dagger. This blow, aimed with sure direction at the chief, roused his followers, who grasped their weapons to

avenge the deed ; when the king, at the very instant of the crisis, with presence of mind and calmness, exclaimed to the multitude, " What means this clamour—Will you kill your king ?—Come, I will be your leader ; follow me to the fields, and what you ask, you shall have." The spirit and confidence thus displayed did more to disarm the revolution than any force that could be brought against it ; and the circumstances show, in a most striking manner, how a blow well aimed, and a word timely uttered, are able, like the interposition of a superior power, to turn from its course an event that was about to overwhelm a nation. But it is only the history of a rude age that can present incidents of such a dramatic character. The concessions which had been made to Tyler and his followers were rescinded, and many hundreds of the prisoners taken, perished by the hand of the executioner.

The period from the death of Richard II. to the accession of Henry VII., a space of eighty-six years, was a most unhappy one for the people of England. No advantage was gained from the wars of Edward III. in France, save the name of some fruitless victories, which only flattered the ambition of the king who won them. These wars and some flashing victories were continued to the death of Henry V. when, happily for the English people, and still more so for the French, an end was put to military expeditions, which exhausted this country as much as they devastated France. But after the death of Henry V. followed the civil wars, which continued for about thirty years, until the ambitious pretensions of two families were quashed by the union of the interests of the two factions under the seventh Henry.

Wars with France and Scotland—cruel civil wars—military burdens, and exactions on the people to gratify the

ambition of kings, or to increase the power of the Aristocracy, distinguished that long period.

The reign of Henry VII. was an important epoch in the history of England. The cupidity of this king acted as a stimulus to the people, to rouse themselves from their lethargy, and we find that, in several parts of the kingdom, there were insurrections, caused by the severity of taxation. But the most active principle put in motion during this reign, was contained in the Agrarian law, which broke the entails of estates, and caused their alienation to other hands. Many great properties were thus dismembered, and distributed among many citizens.

This reign is also distinguished by several events of great consequence that took place, unconnected with this country, but which have had more influence on it than on any other nation of Europe. These were—the discovery of America, and the invention of printing; the opening of the passage by sea to the East Indies, was also a circumstance which eventually led to a British empire in India.

Here these jottings from English history must end, in order to proceed to the consideration of other matters connected with the circumstances of this country.

CHAP. XI.

CONFISCATION OF PROPERTY, AND REFORMATION IN RELIGION.

SACERDOTAL EXACTIONS—REGAL AND ARISTOCRATIC CUPIDITY—THE
ECONOMIC CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF THE REFORMATION—THEY FORMED A
GREAT PROPRIETARY REVOLUTION.

SACERDOTAL exactions from the people, and exemption of the clergy from the burdens, have created more evils to society, and kept it longer in a state of torpor, than all political taxation put together. This must necessarily be the case, as the canon law is a much more serious matter than a lay act of legislation, and a church a much more durable body than a government.

The history of sacerdotal encroachments on the property of a country, would present schemes of deep-laid spoliation perfectly astounding.* Before William of Normandy landed with his army, it is calculated that more than a third of all the lands in England were in the possession of the clergy, exempted from the payment of all taxes, and even military services. So that the ruthless hand of the conqueror, by dividing the lands among his barons, effected an improvement in the country.

This circumstance shows what a singular combination could take place in human affairs, when an event so violent

* The Church-reserves of public lands in Canada are a proof of this: the proportion allowed by law was one-seventh, but the clergy, or their agents, in the act of measuring, contrived to make it a fifth, and, in fact, they secured about half the land in some districts.—*Durham's Report on Canada.*

as the conquest might be considered an amelioration of the condition of a country.

Within two or three generations of men, the cycle of an unjust and oppressive system of lay-taxation, may perhaps be wound up; but it will require more than a thousand years before priestly usurpations shall be put down, or modified by the people subject to the payment.

Previous to the third century, the ministers of the christian religion were maintained by *voluntary* contributions raised among the faithful; and it would appear that the amount collected was so liberal wherever churches were established, as to tempt the holders of the fund to unfair and partial distribution. "The commencement of the third century was also distinguished by the effort to exact as a right, and on the authority of the Levitical law, the contributions which had been hitherto solicited on the more generous terms of christian equity, or of christian benevolence."* About the same time began the attempts of the secular power to encroach on the increasing wealth of the christian churches; and down to the Reformation in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the avarice of the clergy and the cupidity of the civil government were in constant action, to secure the spoils wrung from the people. In the beginning of the third century, the people of Christendom were partly wheedled and partly frightened into the endurance of tithes; and to the present hour, even in Protestant England, the soil is robbed of the tenth of its produce, to support a church as an instrument of state, for political purposes.† The vast wealth of the clergy of England was coveted by the arbitrary Henry VIII, and his confiscation

* Vaughan's Introduction to the Life of Wycliffe, page 30.

† The statistics of tithes, showing the enormity of the exaction on certain articles of produce are extremely curious, and ought to be condensed, and

of the religious houses and their revenues put him in funds to celebrate the Reformation. The change of property at the Reformation effected good by stimulating industry, although at the same time the public were defrauded of an immense amount, which passed into the hands of families who paid no valuable consideration.

On considering the state of affairs in Europe, during the dark ages, down to the middle of the sixteenth century, it will be perceived that most of the events originated in the desire of the church and its branches to possess themselves of the property of the laity. The persecutions of popes and synods, the fires, the racks, and the dungeons of the Inquisition, were raised and employed, as much with the view to bring under confiscation to the church, the property of heretics, as to punish their bodies and torment their minds for disobedience to the requirements of the rubric.*

Long before Luther and Calvin appeared, to dispel the delusions of the Church of Rome, by the presentation of the Bible to the people, the rapacity of the clergy had awakened a pretty general desire in England to get free of

added as a *fortieth* article, to the Articles of the Church of England. It would appear, on the authority of the Rev. — Harlett, quoted in a note at p. 290 of Chalmers's Political Economy, that the tithe of an acre of hops, raised on land worth forty or fifty shillings an acre, is generally worth from £3 to £4. And the value of the tithe of an acre of carrot-seed, raised on land not worth 20s. an acre, is from seven to eight pounds, equal to a tax of seven or eight hundred per cent. on the rental!

To make a tenth produce seven hundred, is truly a modern miracle of the church!

* The unhappy Jews have in every age been objects of persecution, and victims of cupidity.—In Spain the Inquisition made the most of them.—In the fifteenth century, on the expulsion of the whole race from Spain, their property fell a prey to power, both lay and sacerdotal. A house was given for an ass to carry the unfortunate owner—and a vineyard was exchanged for suit of clothes, or for a weapon of defence.—*Mill's Crusades.*

their exactions. The satirist had also employed his ridicule to turn the world's laugh against the pretension and hypocrisy of the priests and monks.

The pope always found the English people the most intractable of all his spiritual subjects. The kings of England were jealous of their prerogative and of foreign interference, and the people did not like the exaction. But notwithstanding these dispositions, it is wonderful to think how much wealth was extracted from the country. Out of the long and heavy list of burdens by the church, from tithes down to candles and ribbons for the honour of the images of saints, perhaps the most extraordinary was the tax paid by England to the church of Rome, commonly called Peter's pence. This originated early in the eighth century, and consisted of a tax of one penny on each householder possessed of thirty pence a year: it was voluntarily offered to the pope by the king of the West Saxons, for the purpose of supporting a college at Rome for the education of Englishmen. But it was afterwards claimed by the pope as a tribute due by England, but was disputed by the English, who, however could not get free from their spiritual bondage, and fiscal oppression: and, strange to say, this tax was continued to be paid for upwards of *eight hundred years* before it was finally abolished by Henry VIII.

This formed a striking instance of the tenacity of sacerdotal disposition, and it ought to be an example to a people, of the danger of allowing the fingers of priests to get into their pockets.

The Reformation of religion in England was a great revolution. The inquisitiveness of men, and the mental activity which was both the cause and effect of it, had created a demand for writings, and this increased demand no doubt stimulated the invention of Faust to produce the

printing press. The first great blessing of the Reformation, was the Bible, in its integrity, put into the hands of the people, who were at once thereby liberated from the mental thralldom to the church of Rome. But the business here is with the economical consequences of that important event.

It has been argued in this Work, that the danger to the property of the inhabitants of a country is to be apprehended from the designs and efforts of a comparatively small number of individuals, incorporated as a Church, or an Aristocracy, and not from the multitude or mass of the people. This position is fully substantiated by the history of the English church down to the Reformation. The state of its property at the conquest has already been referred to. William used no more ceremony with it, than with the property of the laity, but, notwithstanding his proceedings, the church continued to draw to itself such large masses, that Edward the First, in 1279, endeavoured to restrain the acquisition by passing a law to limit the mortmain occupation of real property. In spite of all his precaution, it was found at the Reformation, when Henry VIII. stepped into the possessions of the church, that the clergy were proprietors of seven-tenths of the property of the whole kingdom, being more than double the proportion of what the clergy possessed in 1066. Had an enlightened and patriotic monarch been on the throne of England when the property reverted to the state, an opportunity was afforded for an Agrarian law, which would at once have placed England in circumstances of comfort and independence. But the distribution of the lands and property was preferable in any mode, to lying in possession of worldly clergy, or slothful and debauched monks.

A great quantity was wasted in the wars and intrigues of Henry, and much also found its way into improper

hands, but on the whole there was a pretty general movement and transfer of property, which beneficially affected the circumstances of the country, and gave a spur to the people. The nation at least ceased to be tributary to Rome, and the vast amount of wealth, that formerly left the country to pamper foreign ecclesiastics, now remained at home, to foster agriculture and commerce. The change was favourably seen in the following reigns; and so strong did the national spirit become, that within one hundred years from the death of Henry, the people were struggling for their great constitutional rights, which they eventually secured by the Revolution of 1688.

The inestimable value of the religious freedom secured by the Reformation in England and Scotland, causes the economic and fiscal changes which accompanied and followed that revolution to be overlooked, or considered as mere secondary matters. But, in truth, nothing ever happened in any nation to form a parallel to the Revolution in this country, which at once placed at the absolute disposal of the government, more than two-thirds of the whole property of the kingdom, real and personal, except the proprietary revolution in ancient Egypt, under the wise and beneficent administration of Joseph.

The moral and religious effects of the Reformation are, to this hour, operating throughout a great part of the world, and are, of course, of a value incalculably greater than the price of all the lands in England at that period, or since. The freedom of thought, on the highest of all subjects, acquired by the Reformation, led to an inquisitiveness and mental activity, which displayed themselves in all branches of knowledge, and were practically fixed on the arts and sciences. Navigation, colonization, commerce, manufactures, and all other arts that increase and secure the com-

fort and happiness of man, were improved and extended through the world: and taking a comprehensive view of affairs, without reference to the genius of the people of the respective countries, we see, at this day, the nations that adopted the principles of the Reformation, the most advanced in the arts and improvements enumerated. On this fact there can be no difference of opinion.

There is one circumstance which has been remarked by every person, who has considered the subject, as sufficient of itself to account for a great part of the superior comfort and wealth of the inhabitants of Protestant countries, over those under the Catholic system. In round numbers, it may be stated that, including Sundays, half the year is wasted in holidays in strict Catholic countries. The calendar will show the *exact* number of holidays, but it will not give an estimate of the loss to the community, by the idleness and dissipation continued after the cessation of the holidays. In Protestant countries, the Sundays, with two or three more days in the year, form the times of cessation from labour; these constitute about a seventh of the year: so that, in round numbers, Protestants labour about 100 days more in the year than Catholics, and add in that proportion so much more to the national wealth.

The Reformation in this country was a great economic revolution. Viewing it in this light, it matters not how or when the proprietors of the lands and moveables got possession of them: their titles might have been derived from violence, from fraud, or from spiritual influence misapplied, but the fact was, the titles were guaranteed by the law of the country; and the church, and its members, under the denomination of popes, archbishops, bishops, and priests of various grades, were the acknowledged proprietors of the lands and houses, of the gold and silver plate, of the libraries and other valuables—all of which were confiscated

and seized by the king, or government, of the country, and by him appropriated to his own selfish and ambitious projects—distributed among his favourites—or sold in the general market. The brutal and lustful character of Henry VIII., was perceived in the whole scheme of the spoliation. In the history of this unparalleled event, there is no account of any portion of the immense property confiscated, having been appropriated to any purpose strictly national. It is an historical mystery, how the vast wealth was disposed of. Not a shilling was expended on fortifications roads, bridges, harbours, or on any undertaking for the security or convenience of the people. The nation acquired nothing by the event, but the example, or precedent, of a general scheme of confiscation of property, to be imitated whenever circumstances might demand the repetition. But it lost in one respect by the transfer of property.*

It would appear generally from the time of the conquest, that the clergy had to contribute from their property, a due proportion to the burdens of the country—indeed, church possessions were at all times objects of temptation to the kings and their nobles, so that the clergy found it their interest rather to be liberal, than to excite against themselves the covetous principle in the governing power.

But the great bulk of the lands went to increase the properties of the old aristocratic families, or to create properties for new families, to replace those exterminated in the civil wars, which were terminated by the accession to the throne of Henry VII. By the personal destruction of the armed aristocrats of influence, the power of the order was weakened, but it gradually rose from the time of the

* The foregoing observations refer only to what was retained by the king, and do not include the large property transferred to the Protestant establishment.

Reformation, and struggled to throw off the burdens of taxation on land : and so effectually had the aristocratic order accomplished its object, that in the reign of James II., in little more than a hundred years from the death of Henry VIII., the land-tax had entirely disappeared from the public accounts; and as the people had improved their own circumstances by means already referred to, half the revenue of the kingdom was derived from duties on articles of consumption, namely :—

Excise on beer and ale, £666,000.—Duties on	
wine and vinegar, £182,000.—Duties on	
French brandy, silk, &c. £93,000.—Duties on	
sugar and tobacco, £149,000.	£1,090,000
Tonnage duty, £600,000.—Hearth money	
£245,000.—Post office, 65,000.	910,000

Total public revenue, 1688, £2,000,000

The deeper that the proprietary principle, and the fiscal system existent in this country, be examined and analyzed, the stronger will become the confirmation of the position that property is endangered by the few, and not by the multitude.

Considering the partition of the property of this country caused by the Reformation, it will be perceived that the opportunity was lost of laying the foundation of national greatness on an equitable adjustment of interests.—But a more selfish and ruthless despot could scarcely have been appointed to carry into effect the revolution of property.—Had it taken place under the sway of Henry VII., there might have been the expectation of an Agrarian law, which would have raised in the scale of civilization, a great body of the people. The avaricious disposition of that monarch would have made him secure for himself a large portion of the spoil; but his jealousy of the aristocracy, and his policy

of depressing the order, would have increased his sympathy for the inferior classes of society, when he had the means of raising them to property and influence.

Henry the Seventh, was the son of Mr. Owen Tudor, a Welshman, by Catharine the widow of Henry V., and as his father was said to have been the son of a brewer, we may thus account, by physiological process, for the stalwart character of that king, his son Henry VIII., and granddaughter Queen Elizabeth.

Servius Tullius, or George Washington, would have divided the public lands acquired by the Revolution among their countrymen, on principles that would have secured the comfort, happiness, and consequently the independence, of all parties in the State.

As a corollary from the proprietary revolution in England at the Reformation, the establishment of the Protestant church in Ireland may be here referred to. But as forfeitures of lands took place in that country, for attempts to throw off the yoke of England, penalties for rebellion were added to confiscation of church-property. As the inhabitants of Ireland were almost all Catholics, it became necessary to send Protestants to set up a Protestant church, and about half the quantity of the land of the natives of that island, was divided among the English colonists who settled there.

But the natives have obstinately refused to become converts to the Protestant faith, notwithstanding the existence of about a score of Protestant bishops and a host of clergymen, who have screwed tithes and other exactions out of the unhappy people, for upwards of two hundred years. This sketch will suffice to convey an idea of the origin, progress, and present state of the Protestant church in Ireland.

Whenever examples of the degraded state of a country are wanted for elucidation, and whenever pictures of abject poverty, nakedness, and misery, are required by the politi-

cal economist or romancer, Ireland is sure to be the country whence the examples are taken and the pictures drawn. Its degradation, and the destitution of its inhabitants, arise from its Agrarian system. Ireland was first conquered, and then colonized by England, and for centuries has been exposed to all the malignant influences of the British system of colonization. One of the worst of these, the reckless assignment of the lands in large grants to favoured individuals, was in full vigour in the settlement of the Protestant scheme. Ireland became at that period, and has continued to the present day, the hot-bed of party strife and corruption, and the seat of all the evils that afflict a country, under the irresponsible rule of a faction, alien to the disposition and character of its inhabitants. The bitterness of religious animosity has been mixed, during the last two centuries, with the rancour of political hatred and contempt. Ireland has been kept in a state of subjection, by its proximity to the dominant island. It has been ruled on the principle of a conquered colony: and had the Atlantic, instead of a narrow channel of the sea, separated the two countries, long ere this it would have achieved a national independence.

The causes of the degraded Agrarian state of the bulk of the inhabitants of Ireland and of Hindostan, are precisely similar in their nature. The Zamindary system placed the mass of the population of the latter country completely under the power of the landlords, who, through their various agents, scarcely left sufficient food, whereon the miserable cultivators might exist. But the government stepped forward to save the people, by gradually getting into its own possession, the lands, and throwing out the middle-men, who stood between the cultivators and their subsistence. The government thus became the land-owner,

and fixed an equitable rent, or land-tax, to be paid annually by the occupiers of the ground. In this system, much will of course depend on the intelligence and integrity of the collectors employed by the government, but a responsibility must be attached to the office of collector, who should be kept strictly under it. The miseries of Ireland are matters of public notoriety, as arising from the existence of a numerous class of middle-men.

At the Reformation in the reign of Henry VIII., and on the colonization of Ireland, before and after the Revolution of 1688, the principles of proprietary rights were twice violated: first, by the confiscation in a sweeping manner of the property belonging to the church, and to the natives of the country; and secondly, by the violent and unjust appropriation of the lands, houses, and moveables thus confiscated, by the party who committed the act of spoliation. A great and *general* benefit ought properly to justify a restoration of property belonging to a church, or a portion of the community. In the proprietary revolutions in England, and in the seizure and occupation of the lands of Ireland, the daring of the robber has been united with the low cunning of the thief.*

* *A Memoir of Ireland, Native and Saxon, by Daniel O'Connell.* As these pages are passing through the press, the author of them has seen the above-mentioned extraordinary work by Mr. O'Connell, but he has only as yet glanced at the contents. However, he has read quite sufficient to convince him, that a state of matters has existed, and is allowed to exist, in Ireland, which will most assuredly, sooner or later, call down on England the indignation of mankind for such an outrage, committed by this country on the Irish population. Humanity itself is trampled under foot on the soil of Ireland, and the civilized nations of the world will rouse themselves to demand redress for the unhappy natives; and if justice be not done, and that speedily and effectually, they will be as much justified in stepping forward to avert the destruction of the Irish people, as England, France, and Russia were justified, by civilized and christian principles, in rescuing the Greeks

But without examining, too rigorously, the principles and details of the division of the public property at the two epochs referred to, it will be seen, on taking a wide and lengthened survey, that great temporal blessings to a large from being crushed and massacred by the Turks, within these last twenty-five years; or as these same nations are now justified and authorized, by treaties, to stop the cruelties practised on the Africans, torn from their country to become slaves. In the name of all that is sacred, what are the hardships and distresses of the negroes, compared with the concentration of destitution and misery witnessed in Ireland? A state of matters exists there, far worse than the lowest condition of savage misery in any region of the earth!

Mr. O'Connell addresses his book to Her Majesty, and endeavours to engage the sympathies of the royal female mind in aid of his most unhappy country. It is impossible to believe that Her Majesty can be aware of the real state and condition of so many millions of her subjects; and, in order to save her from the consequences and responsibilities, which this ignorance (presumed to exist) must shortly bring home to the government, it is to be hoped that she will put in execution her visit to Ireland, in the course of this summer, when circumstances may open her eyes to the spectacles of misery, the result of fiscal and Agrarian oppression of the worst kind.

People talk of the blood boiling with indignation on hearing of, or witnessing, any great outrage. On reading some of the extracts from the historians who have described the conquest and occupation of Ireland, and, above all, the accounts of the civil, military, judicial, and ecclesiastical atrocities committed in that country, a flush of the blood is felt every now and then to the head, which confirms the truth of the common expression quoted.

There are three facts or circumstances stated by Mr. O'Connell, which explain at a glance the extent of misery in Ireland; and as these are historical or statistical facts, there can be no question of their accuracy.

The *first*, goes back to the Conquest, under Henry II. The whole of Ireland was assigned over to ten English persons, who received from the grant the title to *all the lands* of that country—thus leaving the natives the alternative of being vassals, or perishing of hunger.

The *second*, in the present day, nine-tenths of the soil are held by *absentees*.

The *third* follows as a consequence from the seizure and occupation of the soil in the manner described—*there are two millions three hundred thousand individuals dependent for subsistence on casual charity!*—that is to say, a third of the whole population in a state of destitution the most horrible.

In truth, society in Ireland is now reduced to first principles, and man is

portion of mankind have resulted from the reformation of religion in the sixteenth century. Such a revolution can best be estimated, by general tendencies and grand results. In another section of this work, an attempt has been made to establish, that one object, very much overlooked, of the Christian dispensation, is to improve the condition of a people in their agrarian, fiscal, and economic arrangements;* but, strange to say, Christian legislators and rulers, though they acknowledge the authority of the Christian law over the thoughts and actions of the private citizen, will scarcely allow it to interfere with their deliberations in the senate, or their decisions in the cabinet. There is at least no formal avowal of any influence from that law, and, in legislative discussion, were an appeal made for support on the principles laid down by Moses or Jesus Christ, it is very probable that it would be met by sneers and ridicule. But, in spite of the intentions and designs of the men who happen to be the agents in carrying through a change in the circumstances of a country, experience has already proved, that the more freedom the Christian religion has to spread, apart from the corrupting influence of the civil and political power of

there struggling in a state of savage nature, produced by the cruel domination of England; hundreds of families are literally torn from the soil on which they have been reared, and expelled by physical force by the constabulary power; and bands of men, to the number of a thousand and upwards, armed with clubs or branches of trees, are rising, in the agony of distress and the energy of despair, to bid defiance to the civil and military forces of the government.

* This branch of the subject is omitted from this work, as being of too biblical a character, but probably it will appear afterwards in a separate publication, to illustrate and recommend the economics of the Mosaic and Christian laws to the fiscal and political circumstances of modern nations. No reason can be given why they should not be introduced into the legislature and cabinet of a country that professes itself Christian.

a country, and when dissevered from all connection with the government, the deeper and stronger becomes its foundation, the more abundant become its temporal resources, and the greater good is extended to men by their possession of the means of subsistence, and by the institutions for education, and for the alleviation of the poverty, pain, and misery, which in the nature of things must afflict a certain class of the inhabitants of a country. In illustration of this, we must again go to America, where, in the contrast between the semibarbaric indolence, the spiritual darkness, and the arbitrary nature of the governments of the former colonies of Spain, and the vigorous, enlightened, and free republic of the United States—we have the materials for the instruction of the whole civilized world. These subjects are not touched upon in a party or sectarian spirit, and they are not influenced by temporary circumstances of disputes about boundaries, or of the insolvency of particular States and repudiation of public debts. These may be considered the accidents that happen to a nation, and are to be regretted for their immediate and future consequences.

Washington, and the other patriotic men who founded the American constitution, did not seize on the public lands wrested from Great Britain, to create immense estates for themselves and their political partisans, but they held them sacred for the use and benefit of the whole community, whereby every citizen found, in proportion to his means, a footing and a home on the soil of his country; and more than that, they held out to the industrious of all nations an asylum against oppression, and offered them, on just principles, lands on which to settle with their families.

It was declared as a fixed principle of the constitution, that “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free use thereof;

or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble and petition the government for a redress of grievances.”* Here it would appear that there was a perfect indifference in the government of the country to the establishment of the Christian, or any other religion whatever. Every thing was left to the conscience of the people, to choose their religion; and to their liberality, to raise funds for its support; and what has been the consequence? The aggregate of all the States in the Union gives the following results:—

Population	.	.	13,000,000	} The year 1830 is taken.
Communicants	.	.	1,550,000	
Churches	.	.	12,580	
Ministers	.	.	11,450	

This gives about one church, and one minister to every 1,000 of the population; results which, in proportion to circumstances, no other Christian country can present. Mr. Buckingham gives many details of this subject in his valuable work on the United States, and to it I am indebted for the above statement, and for what follows. Scotland is generally considered to be as well provided with religious instruction as any country, but it must in this respect yield to the United States.

	Population.	Churches.	Ministers.
3 Atlantic States have	3,871,194	— 4,229	— 3,587
All Scotland . .	2,365,800	— 1,804	— 1,765
3 Interior States	1,862,000	— 1,872	— 1,639

In 10 of the newest States lying to the Westward, there was a population of 3,641,000; churches, 3,701; ministers, 2,690.

In Scotland, there is one minister to every 1,312 of the population. In the three Atlantic States, and in the ten new

* American Constitution 1789.

ones, there is one minister to 917 and 984 persons, respectively. In the large cities there is a similar proportion in favour of America, comparing the following.

	Population.	Churches.	Ministers.
Liverpool . .	210,000	— 57	— 57
New York . .	280,000	— 132	— 142
Glasgow . .	220,000	— 74	— 76
Philadelphia .	200,000	— 93	— 127

The means afforded for education, are more ample in the United States than in any other country.

Out of the whole population, there are receiving education—1 in 5 in the States; 1 in 10 in Scotland; 1 in 12 in England; and 1 in 20 in Wales. There is not space here for details of the educational system established in that country; but to convey an idea of the extent and value of it, it may be mentioned, that in the single State of New York, with a population of about 2,000,000 souls, there is spent annually, in support of the common schools alone, about one million of dollars. In the other States, there is proportionally as much expended. This sum does not include the expense of private seminaries, or academies, for the higher branches of education. In fine, there is throughout the American union, an ample provision for the religious and moral education of every person, even to the poorest in the country; and any family, who has not every member of it able to read and write, and with books in its possession, has itself to blame. This is in a country where there is no national church!

But a church establishment, supported by the nation, would be a good thing, were results, such as described, to follow from it. But, how does the matter stand in this country? It is notorious, that an amount of funds is raised every year, sufficient to endow many national churches,

and yet about half the population are Dissenters, who support their own ministers. It also stands on record, that in certain parts of Yorkshire and Wales, within the island of Great Britain, there is a class of the population who never heard of Jesus Christ, or, if they have heard of him, cannot say who he was! It is perhaps reserved for England, out of all the countries in Europe, Asia, and America, to have some of its people in a state of such gross ignorance, as not to have heard a name that fills the universe!—Yet, there is an Archbishop of York, and a Bishop of Durham, who receive princely revenues from the very counties debased by such a state of things existent in it! If such ignorance as is described exist in this country, it is happiness to be ignorant of the fact; but the knowledge of it must spread, and the parties who allowed, or profited by, or connived at, this ignorance, must sink beneath the national scorn and contempt.

But the acts of the legislature of this country display a jealousy, and even dread, of the people becoming enlightened.*

The portion of North America formerly under the dominion of Great Britain is, since the separation of the countries, the only part of the globe where the great experiment is making of leaving man entirely to his own resources, and where no one individual, no family, no section of the community, step forward to claim a preference to the public lands of the country, and still less to the right of govern-

* There is in our system a blindness of intellect and an infatuation quite extraordinary in a country such as this, in affairs concerning the substantial comfort of the population. Our convicts entail on the country an enormous expense. Ignorance is at the root of all this. Were our legislators to apply arithmetic to such questions, they would find that the feeding, clothing, and safe custody, of half a dozen of criminals a year, will amount to about as much as the expense of educating four or five hundred children.

ing their countrymen. It is a most important experiment, in the success of which the whole human race is interested, and in the issue of which, the providence of the Almighty will be justified. But half a century is much too limited a period to test the experiment. The great enterprise must be carried through three or four generations of men, before experience shall have stamped its seal on it. But as far as the experiment has yet gone, we find a people, although unsettled in some things, in possession of a greater degree of personal, civil, and political liberty, than ever fell to the lot of mankind before ; and we find the Christian religion, though unsupported by the State, flourishing and extending its influence ; and we find throughout the wide extent of that country, no class of men, and scarcely an individual, who does not possess a sufficiency of bread.*

* "Christianity implies by one of its rites, too sacred to be particularized, that all the individuals of a Christian community should have at least a sufficiency of the first element of life."—From the MS. of *The Economics of the Mosaic and Christian Dispensations*, by the Author of this work.

.CHAP. XII.

APPLICATION OF THE WHOLE ARGUMENT TO THE CONDITION OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

**THE PRESENT STATE IS THE RESULT OF A LONG CONTINUANCE OF BAD LAWS,
AND NOT THE EFFECT OF TEMPORARY DERANGEMENT OF TRADE AND
FINANCE.—THE GREAT QUESTIONS AT ISSUE.**

FOR three hundred and fifty years the sovereignty of these Islands has been successively exercised by the Tudors, the Stuarts, the Oranges, and the Guelphs; and it is to be ardently hoped by every lover of his country, that the People, the Sovereign, and the Aristocracy will, in their respective spheres of action, be guided by those great lessons which the history of nations, above all, which the history of their own nation, affords.

Each and all of these parties will require to prepare themselves for great changes in the circumstances of this country, and in the balance of its interests. The country will only deceive itself, and be eventually thrown into still greater confusion, if a belief be fostered that the derangement of affairs in every department of business and finance, which has existed for several years past, is merely of a temporary nature, and that the country only waits for a revival of trade and the opening of foreign markets, to recover its energies.

Unfortunately, many circumstances have united within the short space of three years, to produce a stagnation and derangement of trade in most of the main branches of the manufactures of the country : and as these are well known to every person connected with business, and are even obvious to superficial observers, people may imagine that these causes of distress will soon pass away, and matters resume their wonted activity. As soon as the partial cause of any particular distress shall be removed, it naturally may be expected that the distress will disappear at the same time. But the grand cause of the general distress is neither partial nor temporary. Palliative measures will only be like oil thrown on the heaving surges of the troubled ocean.

There is another delusion, which it will be well for the people to get quit of at this critical juncture of their affairs, and that is, the delusion of party politics, and the trusting to this administration, or the other administration, as the saviour of the country. The abuse of party and the vulgar recrimination between statesmen and public men, in and out of parliament, are thrown out merely to divert attention from the main objects of personal interest, contemplated by the fortunate adventurer of the day ; or to conceal from the public a secret understanding which may exist between the individuals who have retired from office, and those who have entered into it. Such have been the disclosures made of dereliction of principle by men of high rank and influence in the country, and such is the debasing effect of power on their character, that a person may believe anything of them in the present day. Among the mixed motives which sway the minds of two political men, a person may imagine that the desire to promote a relative to the bench in India, or to advance another to a diplomatic office, may stimulate the one to plot the ruin of an adminis-

tration, or the other to expose his country to danger in its foreign interests.

The indecent haste with which appointments to lucrative offices are made in favour of needy dependents of the minister, confirms this view of the moving springs of political changes. There is now an example of rapacity displayed on every change of government, sufficient to corrupt a whole people: and the shameless profligacy of one administration is unblushingly held forth by an organ of the party, as a precedent for the succeeding one, as will be perceived in such remarks as the following:—They (the Whigs) remained in place until they had multiplied precedents against themselves on points of prerogative, expenditure, inefficiency, and corrupt abuse of power and patronage, which must for ever shut their mouths as an opposition, whatever may be the fancied irregularities of any other government.”*

Such is the nature of the advocacy of a corrupt system of government for an enlightened people. The description is a correct one, of the irresponsible administrations which have existed one after the other, for the last hundred years in this country. The people have never been really represented in any of those administrations; and the two sections into which the dominant party is divided, have, in their exactions from the people, differed only in degree. These factions, that run the race of reckless expenditure, and for “the corrupt abuse of power and patronage,” are the progeny of a system, which contains in itself the principles that rouse a nation to reform itself—those principles of cupidity which are employed by the Ruler of all society, to stimulate a nation to free itself from fiscal bondage.

* Article on “the Prospects under the Peel Administration,” in *Blackwood's Magazine*, for October 1841.

Calmly reviewing the history of nations that have passed through great revolutions, and comparing the state of their circumstances previous to the break-up of society, with the present condition of Great Britain in all its relations, the impression is forced on the mind, that a great change will inevitably take place in this country. The prospect in one sense is appalling, as the imagination at first throws dark colours on the picture; but as the genius of the British population is sedate, and their temperament cool, there need be little apprehension of violent outbreak, or extreme measures, either personal or proprietary. But, in straining the vision into futurity, the cheering reflection arises, that all the great organic changes which have taken place in this nation, have resulted in a greater degree of comfort and happiness to the mass of the people, and consequently the national power and prosperity have been increased. A revolution, in the ordinary sense of the term, is a change carried round and completed.

Men's minds ought to be prepared and made up on this great question, and the real matter at issue ought to be clearly defined and perfectly understood. The characteristic of all the changes and revolutions in this country, has been one of practical every-day business.—A matter-of-fact character is stamped on all the great events recorded in the history of the country. Order, silence, and earnestness in all public transactions, are observed wherever and whenever the objects are really worth the trouble and danger to be expended or encountered.

In oratorical assemblies, there are occasionally some noise and confusion, and of course a little personal heat; but from the House of Commons, during some great party question, such as a vote on the pension list—down to a vestry meeting, to levy a church-rate on Dissenters—there

are no flourishes attempted by the speakers on the honour and glory of the subject—but the questions are discussed on plausible grounds, showing how much religion is concerned in the one case; and in the other, how the credit of the government would suffer, and the delicacy of some dowager-pensioner be wounded, by inquiring into the date and motive of some snug allowance enjoyed perhaps in a suite of royal apartments, occasionally let by the pensioner at so many hundred pounds a year. In out-door meetings of the people, and at any great national or municipal spectacle, there is little excitability perceived; order and calmness prevail, and there is scarcely any circumstance that can be imagined, that would unbend the limbs of a vast multitude of British men, and cause them to whirl round in the mazes of the dance, like what took place in Paris, during the imposing ceremony of swearing to the constitution in 1790, and during the solemnity of the funeral procession of Napoleon, in the winter of 1840.* This difference in the

* “The national guard, during the hours which preceded the arrival of the procession, amused the spectators ‘d’une danse ronde,’ and with a thousand whimsical and playful evolutions, highly expressive of that gaiety which distinguishes the French character. I believe, none but Frenchmen would have diverted themselves, and half a million of people, who were waiting in expectation of a scene the most solemn upon record, by circles of ten thousand men galloping ‘en danse ronde.’ . . . In an instant every sword was drawn, and every arm lifted up. The King pronounced the oath, which the President of the National Assembly repeated, and the solemn words were re-echoed by 600,000 voices, while the Queen raised the Dauphin in her arms showing him to the people and the army.” —*Letters of Helen Maria Williams*, 1790.

The weather in Paris, in December, 1840, was excessively cold, and the immense crowds of troops and civilians, while waiting for the grand funeral procession of Napoleon, began by stamping their feet to keep themselves warm, and ended by innumerable parties of waltzers and dancers. Napoleon himself truly said, that there was only “one step between the sublime and the ridiculous.”

disposition and habits of the English and French people, ought to be particularly remarked, as indicative of the diversity of their character.

The fantastic tricks played by the French at the beginning of their Revolution, have been deservedly held up to ridicule, and their excesses have been made political goblins and spectres, whereby to frighten the nation. But were the people of these Islands to be reduced to the utmost misery, and were starved by force of law, and, in the agony of self-preservation, to overturn the throne, and for a period spread anarchy around, still the institution of trial by jury would survive the shock, and give protection to life and property. It is highly honourable to the national character to state, that of all the institutions, laws, and customs of this country, that of trial by jury is almost the only one which has preserved its purity during a thousand years, and in the present day is as efficient for its purposes, as it ever was at any past period. This is the more remarkable, as it is an institution at times very obnoxious to power, and for the deterioration of which, several vigorous efforts have been made at various times. But its foundations rest on the integrity and the intelligence of the inhabitants of these islands, and neither power nor corruption has been able to overcome or destroy those qualities.

The questions at issue, in this country, are not matters of dispute between the people and the sovereign authority of the nation, but they are simply questions of a fiscal nature, on which the eternal principles of equity can be brought to bear, and to which arithmetical rules can be applied. The great question lies between the mass of the population and a section of it; and is reduced to—whether, in a national emergency, the dominant class of society, possessed of the greater part of the property of the country,

shall be made to contribute to the public expenses in proportion to the value of that property; or shall be allowed to continue to pay only in proportion as common citizens: thus evading their due share of the public burdens, which fall on the industry and labour of the great bulk of the people—thus compelled to pay for themselves, and also for the possessors of property, who make the laws, formed on unfair principles. If this outline of British legislation be correctly drawn—and of the truth of it, scarcely any one who has considered the subject will doubt—then it is manifest, that injustice pervades the system of our fiscal laws. But when, to the injustice of principle is added a weight of pressure unparalleled in ancient or modern times in any country, it will be perceived, that the two great causes, which have through all the world moved society from its equilibrium, exist in full strength in the British empire. These observations are not made in an inflammatory spirit, but are stated calmly, as the result of what may be called a philosophic survey of a few passages in the affairs of mankind, brought to bear on the concerns of this country.*

To the great French war, into which we plunged just fifty years ago, is to be traced a great part of the calamity which now overhangs, like a dark and thunder-charged cloud, the British nation. The horrors of that conflict are now matters of historical record, but its economic or fiscal consequences are felt by every poor man at present living here. The men who planned and conducted that war, and who held to the lips of the nation, the maddening draught to drown reflection, drew for the funds on the resources of a generation at that time unborn. On looking back to that

* The vast masses of the population now maintained and fed at the public expense in this country, present features fearfully assimilating to the condition of the Roman population, at the end of the Republic.

period of terrible excitement, from the present time of exhaustion caused by it, we awake as from a swoon, and wonder where are the fruits of so much expenditure, and the trophies of so many victories? We behold the nation, whose throat we grasped and thought we had subdued, now erect with renewed vigour, and rivalling us in commerce and navigation. This we ought to rejoice at; for it is better to have neighbours in good circumstances, prosperous and contented—than others, poor and restless, ever on the watch to encroach on territory not their own. But the galling circumstance in the present time, and that adds bitterness to the national distress, is to see those nations that we saved, at the cost of so much blood and treasure, now slamming their sea-ports in our face, and taunting us with being selfish and grasping monopolists. This truly is the severest cut of all; and yet the people of this country have themselves to blame in a great degree, by passively allowing the national counsels to be directed by a party, that neither represents the national intelligence, nor holds out the open hand of fellowship to the inhabitants of other nations.*

There was one man of splendid genius, who, by his eloquence in the senate, and by the power of his pen, contributed to fan the fatal enthusiasm of the party that led this country into the French revolutionary war. His work on the French Revolution has been the text-book for that

* It would appear, that there is some risk of the miserably-taxed people of this country, being called upon to pay the interest of a debt, guaranteed to establish a German lad on the throne of Greece, set up fifteen or twenty years since. There have been rumours of the insolvency and approaching bankruptcy of the government of that country; and, melancholy to relate, there was a deficiency of funds to furnish the royal residence of King Otho the First!

party, down to the present time. He was an advocate of great talents, but the most brilliant of them were of an imaginative character; and the sight of the defaced and fallen Corinthian capital of French society, struck his mind with horror, which coloured all his views and all his prospects of the great event. His nerves were too sensitive, or his taste too artificial, to permit him to perceive anything in the upheaving of a mighty nation, but nobility and priesthood "trodden down under the hoofs of a swinish multitude." But how short-sighted he was, of the grand results of the struggle, into which he was aiding to lead his country! Were he now to rise from his grave, and take a comparative glance at the national accounts of England and France, how he would be thereby astonished, on referring to what he wrote at the outbreak of the Revolution on the effects of national debts! He wrote in 1790: "Nations are wading deeper and deeper into an ocean of boundless debt. Public debts, which at first were a security to governments, by interesting many in the public tranquillity, are likely, in their excess, to become the means of their subversion. If governments provide for these debts by heavy impositions, they perish by becoming odious to the people. If they do not provide for them, they will be undone by the efforts of the most dangerous of all parties; I mean, an extensive discontented money-interest, injured, and not destroyed. The men who compose this interest, look for their security, in the first instance, to the fidelity of government—in the second, to its power. If they find the old government effete, worn out, and with their springs relaxed, so as not to be of sufficient vigour for their purposes, they may seek new ones that shall be possessed of more energy; and this energy will be derived, not from an acquisition

of resources, but from a contempt of justice. *Reflections* are favourable to confiscation.* That war cost £1,100,000,000, of which about the half remains a permanent debt on the country, and the interest of which is alone more than the whole expense of this nation at the time that Burke wrote these words : "It is with the greatest difficulty that I am able to separate policy from justice. Justice is itself the great standing policy of civil society; and any eminent departure from it, under any circumstances, lies under the suspicion of being no policy at all."—The government that now rules the country, is the offspring of that which commenced the great war, and it will be reasonable that it should bear in mind the oracular announcement of one of the promoters of that war.

In addition to an amount of taxation unequalled in any country or age, made irritating by the partiality of its partition, is a system of laws, restricting the supply of food in the country. The councils of government are now employed in weighing grains of wheat and grains of barley, and calculating, in shillings and pence, how much a quarter ought to pay on entering this country, or how much it ought to be charged on being conveyed across the frontiers of Canada, from the fertile soil of New York, or of Ohio, and

* "Reflections on the French Revolution," by Edmund Burke. The following remarks of Burke deserve notice at this time : "It is not any fear of the confiscation of our church-property, from this example in France, that I dread, though I think this would be no trifling evil. The great source of my solicitude is, lest it should ever be considered in England as the policy of a state to seek a resource in confiscation of any kind ; or that any one description of citizens should be brought to regard any of the others as their proper prey." The Church of England property was all acquired by one act of confiscation ; and whatever may be the policy of the governing party in this country, their practice is to "have a resource in confiscation," by having the property of the mass of the citizens as "their proper prey."

then to be doled out to the famishing people of the British islands. Now, let the high and noble of the land mark this well, and let the entire bench of bishops confirm the unholy tax, laid on with the vain expectation of its being able to neutralize a law of society. The attempt is futile. The nation remonstrates against this tax—it protests against the ignoble and paltry imposition of a small piece of silver on an article of necessary food.

But in the successful resistance to this tax, the consequences are immeasurably more important to this nation, and to the whole civilized world, than would appear from the mere saving of a minute fraction of money on a pound of bread. Great things are involved in the issue.

In the first place, there will be the triumph of justice over the most cruel fiscal despotism that ever cramped the energies of a great nation; then will follow liberty of commerce, by the downfall of barriers which had been raised in order to throw into the hands of a few what belonged to the million. An impetus will be given by the event, and a forward march taken by the British people, who want only to be freed from trammels, to accomplish whatever they deliberately plan for their own improvement. Commercial freedom will increase and strengthen political liberty and political power; and the inhabitants of other countries will give their sympathies, and be glad to accept a fair exchange of trading advantages. Mutual interest is the grand bond of nations, as of individuals.

But there is a blindness and an infatuation in the possessors of power which may operate violently in opposition, and the inflammable matter may be compressed the deeper into the fabric of society by the superincumbent weight. In this case, time and events will again add to the history of mankind another convulsion, to sweep the earth.

Beginning with Christianity the greatest of all revolutions, Europe and America are indebted for their liberty and civilization to a series of revolutions originating in resistance to harsh or unjust taxation.

The Author of Christianity paid under protest, or with a reserve, the tax of half a shekel to the sanctuary.* A

* "And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute-money came to Peter and said, Doth not your Master pay tribute? He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? Of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? Of their own children, or of strangers? Peter saith unto him, Of Strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free. Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first comes up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money; that take, and give unto them for me and thee."

There is in the miracle performed on this occasion, something quite different from all the other miracles done by Christ, as we have here exhibited a supernatural power to obtain a small piece of money. The means employed were out of all proportion to the end accomplished. As the receiver of the tribute first applied to Peter, whom Jesus "prevented" from paying, it would appear from the expression, that Peter really had money sufficient to satisfy the demand. It is therefore to be inferred that there is more in the transaction than meets the eye, and the miracle was performed to attract attention to it. In the marginal notes to Bagster's Comprehensive Bible, the word "tribute" in the text is explained by "Didrachma," a Greek coin of the value of 1s. 3d. sterling, or half a shekel, which appears to have been the poll-tax paid by every male adult among the Jews to the Sanctuary.

And the words "a piece of money" are translated a "stater, or half an ounce of silver, in value 2s. 6d." It thus appears that the money found in the mouth of the fish was the sum required for the tax of two persons. Now this tax was originally imposed by Moses for an offering to the Lord, "to make an atonement for your souls." But the necessity for this tax did not exist in the case of the Author of Christianity, and he merely gave the money, "lest he should offend them" by the refusal to pay. He paid the tax on reasons of expediency, or with protest; and the lesson to be derived by nations from the circumstance is this. That a fiscal, or any other law, ought to be abrogated, as soon as the circumstances which gave rise to it

thousand years later, the tax of a bezant roused all Europe to pour forth its population to avenge oppression. The taxes and plunderings of King John of England produced the charter of liberty. An illegal tax of four ounces of silver stirred the English people to arms, to expel their king, and change the succession to the throne. An imposition of a tax of a small piece of copper on an article of food, drove the Americans into a rebellion which terminated in their independence. Oppressive taxation, long continued, excited the French nation to an inhuman energy of revolution. Spain is decaying under a fiscal system which dries up the sources of national wealth, and futurity has yet to unfold what shall result from the efforts of the British nation to free itself from an intolerable load and distribution of taxation; and the tax of a few shillings on a quarter of wheat, will yet rouse society over the habitable globe.

have ceased to operate. The British statute-book contains many laws of such a nature, and, on this principle, the law of septennial parliaments is not binding on the consciences of the citizens of Great Britain and Ireland; as it was passed in order to concentrate the power of the country to suppress a rebellion more than 120 years ago, but has been retained in order to consolidate a fiscal power greater than ever weighed down a nation.—From the MS. of *The Economics of the Mosaic and Christian Dispensations*, by the Author.

CHAP. XIII.

THE GREAT REVOLUTION.

THE INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY INTO EUROPE, IN A CORN-LADEN VESSEL.

THEOLOGICANS and historians have recognized in the establishment and extension of great empires for the blessing or curse of mankind, the hand of an overruling Providence ; and certain it is that a comprehensive view of sacred and profane history confirms the truth of the opinions entertained on this subject. It appears that great results in the affairs of mankind have been brought about only by means of governments resting on the resources of vast masses of population, and, according to the wisdom, justice, and humanity—or barbarism, tyranny, and cruelty—displayed, has been the happiness or the misery of the people subject to those governments. In the prophetic books of the Bible are to be seen frequent denunciations of calamities and destruction on nations for their crimes ; and, on the other hand, there are predictions of prosperity, happiness, and power, to nations in carrying forward beneficent designs.

Without fixing attention on the great empires which preceded the establishment of the Roman dominion, it will only be necessary to refer to the widely extended power of the Romans, as a signally marked instance in the history of

the world of a great civilizing influence in existence at a period when it pleased the Deity to reveal to mankind a knowledge of his will, and it will be perceived that that empire afforded the facility of spreading the knowledge of the Christian religion.

In the itineraries, or narratives of the proceedings of the Apostles, are to be found the accounts of the facilities which the vessels employed in the free commerce carried on, afforded to those holy men in their voyages from port to port, in Syria, Asia Minor, Greece, and Italy, and perhaps to Spain, and even to the British islands. So frequent, indeed, was the commercial intercourse between the various ports on the coasts of the Mediterranean Sea, that Saint Paul and his companions, in their missions appeared to have found no difficulty in getting conveyance from place to place whenever wanted. There are some remarkable circumstances connected with his memorable voyage to Rome, to make his appeal to Cæsar, and to hold communion with the Christians already established in that city. He sailed in a vessel belonging to Adramyttium, from Cesarea to Myra, a port of Asia Minor, about midway between the islands of Cyprus and Crete, and at Myra he took his passage in an Alexandrian vessel bound for Italy; and, what will appear very striking to those who view the prohibition by the laws of this country, of a foreign trade in corn as anti-Christian, is the fact, that the cargo of the ship in which the great Apostle embarked, CONSISTED OF WHEAT. The incidents of that miraculous voyage, are well known; and what will give an idea of the many opportunities of voyaging by trading-vessels at that period, is to perceive that Saint Paul found in the creek or harbour, where he was wrecked, another vessel of Alexandria lying weather-bound on her passage to a port in Italy; and, in that good ship

called the "*Castor and Pollux*," the Apostle continued his voyage. As this vessel was from Alexandria, it is very probable that her freight consisted of corn for the Italian market.

When Christians in this country reflect on the history and character of the illustrious personage carrying a message from God to the dark heathen world, and taking his passage in a corn-laden ship, they will be struck with devout admiration of the providence of the Almighty. Let them reflect on the eternal importance of that voyage performed by the grand missionary of Christianity. Let them meditate on the influence of the writings of that holy man, who probably composed, in the very ship which conveyed him, some of those inspired works that carry hope and consolation to millions who groan under cruel laws made by selfish governments. Let them, at the present time, devoutly reflect on all the circumstances of that memorable voyage, and they will perceive that a degree of sanctity has been imparted to a trade so highly distinguished. Indeed, there is a very holiness in the flag that floats over a corn-laden ship: it is like the olive-branch between nations, for, of all the benign and civilizing influences of commerce, the warm and kindly feelings with which a famishing people give welcome to the men who bring from another nation supplies of food, and the gratification experienced by the latter in being the bearers of relief to their fellow-creatures, must be the most beneficial. Such a commerce has in it the quality of mercy: "it blesseth him that gives, and him that takes."

It will take long, however, before such considerations as these touch the sordid spirit of corn-law monopoly. But there is a good spirit and an enlightened mind in the vast mass of the British people, who have only to exert them, to frown

into silence those in favour of barbarous and antiquated systems. It would be well for Christians of all denominations to bring their opinions to favour the utmost freedom of commerce, on higher and holier grounds than those on which the question generally rests.

In these latter ages it is manifest that the British empire has exercised an influence and wielded a power as great, and in some respects greater, than the Roman empire of old; and were the activity, the enterprise, and intelligence of its people freed from the trammels of prohibitive laws, and allowed to act upon a government really, and not nominally, resting on the people, there is a vision of power and glory in prospect for them brighter and more enduring than anything which history has yet exhibited to mankind. The mantle of the Roman dominion fell on the British Islands, so far as respects the wide extent of their empire over the globe, and the nations which have sprung from them; but Christianity and science have imparted a moral and physical power exceeding, out of all calculation, that which the Romans possessed. The Divine Author of Christianity, in rebuking the Jews for their cruelties and unbelief, declared—"Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." WHAT NATION is to be thus distinguished?

[This chapter appeared first in the columns of the "City Chronicle and Commercial Advertiser" of 14th September 1841; and the author again publishes it, as its subject is suited to the nature of this work—the rest of which is quite original.]

BOOK II.

THE ORIGIN, PROGRESS, AND CONSOLIDATION OF THE BRITISH ARISTOCRATIC POWER.

CHAP. I.

THE FOOD OF THE PEOPLE FORMS THE BASIS OF THE BRITISH ARISTOCRATIC POWER.

THE STATE OF THE CASE, AS ILLUSTRATED BY THE PROVISION LAWS.—THE ARGUMENT DOES NOT ENCROACH UPON THE PREROGATIVES OF THE SOVEREIGN—NOR TOUCH THE PRINCIPLE OF THE DIVISION OF THE LEGISLATIVE POWER IN THE COUNTRY.—HISTORICAL SKETCH AND COMPARISON OF FISCAL EPOCHS.

THE struggles which, in the present year, 1842, are carried on by the British people, to free themselves from the restriction on their food, and to recover the exercise of their industry, depressed by the governing aristocratic party, are practical commentaries on the doctrine, that the control of subsistence constitutes political power. The British empire has been actually convulsed, and the people are waiting the issue of events which are to decide its fate. Unjust laws, and the galling load of unequal taxation, long persevered in, are now producing the usual consequences of discontent and heart-burnings among the people, and a patient but firm resolution to get those laws abrogated. Manufactures and commerce have been paralyzed, and are

on the decline, under the operation of these impolitic regulations. The dense population of the manufacturing towns is thrown out of employment, and poverty and destitution, from Paisley to Windsor, overspread the country.*

The alternate prohibition, and the heavy taxation, of food, imported into this country under the provision-laws, stand out in bold relief as cases of cruelty and barbarism, almost without parallel in the history of any people. And, as they will most assuredly become soon matters of by-gone history, it is proper to preserve an outline of a system formed to check the industry and cramp the progress of the people of a great nation, inhabiting an insular territory. The framers of these laws are not accused of the diabolical intention of throwing this country into the horrors of revolution, by the outbreak of a starving population; but they must be reminded, that the consequences of locking up in the public granaries of this kingdom, large heaps of foreign corn, of which the law prohibits the despatch to a people without work and without food, may be as dreadful as the anarchy contemplated by Cataline in ancient Rome, or as the destructive violence practised by the population of Paris, roused to fury by the artificial famine caused by Philip d'Orleans.

* The condition of the population in the manufacturing districts, is a matter of too melancholy a notoriety to require description; but in the town which surrounds the favourite abode of the sovereign of these realms, there appears to be an amount of destitution which contrasts strikingly with the luxury which dwells in the palace. On the occasion of the christening of the heir-apparent to the throne, there was a distribution of food and fuel made to the inhabitants of Windsor, and out of a population of about 10,000 souls, there were upwards of 4,000 applicants for the royal bounty. This state of society assimilates to that in Eastern countries, where the monarch lives enthroned amidst a nation of helpless paupers.—See Morning Herald newspaper of December 11, 1841.

Perhaps mankind may outgrow the practice of forming laws to restrict in any way the operations of commerce, and learn to confine the attention of governments to simple police-protection to persons and property.

But as it will be long before such a system will become common, we must be content to get the most obnoxious parts of restriction first done away with.

There is a reason founded in humanity for a prohibition, under peculiar circumstances of a people, of the exportation from a country of bread-corn and other articles of food: and there is also one, for a premium, or bounty, on the introduction of articles of food into a country, the population of which is overgrowing the internal means of subsistence. We may imagine even the United States of America, with all their resources—becoming straitened in home-supplies, either from a failure of crops, or from an extraordinary influx of strangers driven from Europe by wars and civil broils—compelled for a time to prohibit the export of wheat, flour, and other grain. And we see that the Chinese, a wise and provident people, allow a large bounty on the importation of rice into their country. Every foreign vessel that enters the port of Canton, takes a large proportion of her cargo in rice, in order to secure a reduction of the port-dues. China is a remarkable country, and is cultivated to the highest state of perfection attainable by such a people: so valuable is the land, that even hedges are avoided as boundaries of fields, and yet the government encourages by a bounty the importation of the kind of grain preferred by the inhabitants! The government of China, however, is not an aristocratic one, but it is a pure despotism, under a monarch who, by the law, and by the habits and opinions of the people, is considered in the relation of a father to his family, and with paternal feelings

adopts every means to secure full feeding for his children. He of course exercises his authority when necessary, and, in the consistency of his character, applies the bamboo to his subjects, analogous to the whipping given to naughty children.

These regulations of prohibition of export, and of bounty on the import, of corn, are plain and intelligible. But laws of prohibition or restriction on the importation of food, into a country with a population supposed to be redundant, and this redundancy shipped off year after year, at an enormous expense, to every wilderness in America, Africa, and Australia, form anomalies in human conduct, that, to an inhabitant of the moon, or other ex-terrestrial region, must appear perfectly inexplicable. But when this lunar observer discovers that a considerable portion of the male adult population is actually in the condition of paupers maintained at the public expense, that the great bulk of the population are complaining of want of trade, in consequence of not being allowed to import their food, that they cannot get enough of food at home, and, in fine, that poverty, recklessness, and contempt for the law, are spreading through the country—and all this while the governing part of the population are revelling in abundance, competing in extravagance, and rioting in every luxury—he must come to the conclusion that mental blindness has seized the rulers of such a country, or that hearts of demons have usurped their breasts.

But it will not do to form any such conclusions. He must know, that these laws are for the encouragement of agriculture! but unless he come down to the earth, it is impossible to explain to him how it happens that the grand result of these laws is such wide-spread misery among the inhabitants of the country. Another reason given for these

laws is, to make us independent of all foreign nations for such an indispensable article as bread-corn. He would presume from this, that the people wanted to get all their corn from abroad, and to stop altogether the cultivation of the lands at home; but this is quite a mistake, as every person wishes to see as much food in the country as it is possible, whether raised in or out of it. For almost every other article essential to our manufacturing, commercial, and naval greatness,* we are dependent on foreigners, and there is a principle in human nature which makes reciprocal interest the great bond of nations. He must know also, that the authors of these laws maintain that they are necessary for our safety in case of war: but this is an argument which displays moral cowardice in its supporters, foreign to the character of the British people; for even their greatest enemies must admit that they are not a people that shrink from dangers, either present or remote, but coolly and bravely meet them, prepared for the issue whatever it may be. There is something so self-tormenting in this pusillanimous conduct of placing a country, in times of profound peace, and with prospects of their permanency, in a condition preparing for war, as to approach to the idiosyncrasy of a miser, trembling under fear of starvation with the abundance of every thing at his command. Dreadful would be the fate of this country, were its destinies in the hands of a party actuated by such a sordid and pusillanimous disposition during the dangers of a foreign war, or of an invasion of the native soil.

The laws prohibiting, or imposing heavy duties on the importation of animal and vegetable food into the British

* Even the very ropes, cordage, and sails of our ships of war, are manufactured by us of materials received from a country under a powerful and despotic monarch, who may become our most formidable enemy.

Islands, are of a comparatively modern date. The party that enacted them must have derived its mighty power from some source antecedent to these laws, and it will therefore be necessary to go to the origin of this fiscal political power, and to trace its progress.

This is not a question that touches or encroaches upon the executive power of the sovereign, or his prerogatives. For the support of the executive authority, and for the maintenance of the institutions of the country, a certain amount of revenue is required; and, in one point of view, it is apparently indifferent to the monarch, from what source the funds are derived, and in what way they are collected. The arrangement of these points is left entirely to the parties who are to pay the amount; or, in theory, it is supposed that they are left. At all events, the sovereign does not directly interfere in the business, but he demands of his subjects to settle among themselves in what manner, and within what time, a given amount shall be paid into the treasury. It is manifestly for the interest of the sovereign, and for his security and happiness, that his people should be prosperous and happy: but the great misfortune of the prince is, that he cannot see with his own eyes, or hear with his own ears, what is going on beyond the precincts of his palace, or his accustomed haunts; and as he is the grand umpire in the disputes of parties and factions in the country, he is continually surrounded by persons who have a strong interest, or bias, in favour of measures represented for the general good, though perhaps really meant for the advantage of a small section of the population, and that, perhaps, the most wealthy and powerful part of it.

It is considered proper to make these observations, before proceeding farther, in order at once to prevent any impression being made of a design to sap the foundations of the

monarchy. It can be demonstrated from the whole tendency of British history, that the throne, resting on constitutional principles, has been the safeguard of the liberties of the people against the efforts of the aristocratic power to crush them;* and the people may rest assured, that, were the throne overturned, and an elective executive magistrate with the name of president, protector, or any other, raised in its place, this country would become the scene of fierce struggles among a score of powerful men for the possession of the government, and intrigue and corruption would alternate with violence and civil war, through the length and breadth of the land.

From historical evidence, and on conviction, the people ought therefore to look up to the throne as the palladium of their freedom: and, independent of this attachment to constitutional monarchy, there are, in the sovereign who now reigns, circumstances which strongly engage the affections, and strengthen the loyalty, of her subjects. Without enumerating these particular circumstances, it will be necessary only to say that Queen Victoria, by her presence of mind, her calmness in danger, and her consideration for the safety of other persons, has drawn towards her the sympathies of a manly people.

While it is acknowledged that the throne is the barrier that stands between the people and the ambitious aristocratic faction; on the other hand, it is maintained that the sovereign, who takes a proper view of his position, will

* The increase of popular power in the form of trading guilds and corporations, was from the encouragement of the crown, as a counterpoise to the power of the aristocracy. But the exclusive or aristocratic principle entered into those very corporations, which in the course of time, and from the altered circumstances of the people, became the very hot-beds of corruption.

find in the people the truest friends and the firmest supporters.

In order to guard against misconception of the design of these observations, it may be well also to state decidedly, that the object contemplated, is to free the great body of the people from the invasion of the aristocratic party, and to restore them to their just rights; and not to destroy the legitimate influence of the constitutional higher branch of the legislative body. It is essential to the preservation of the liberties of the people, that the legislative or deliberative assembly be divided into two independent branches, for the purpose of a mutual check on each other, and to prevent haste and carelessness in the formation of laws. Countries with the legislative power in the possession of one body of men, have quickly fallen into the worst species of despotism—that which is covered with a guise of liberty, to deceive to ruin. The Roman people, with all their passion for freedom, and with all their energy, could not stand against the senate. Their tribunes were more properly their attorneys or leaders, than their representatives, in the modern meaning of the word. The liberties of the English people were rapidly giving way, during the time of the one-sided legislation of Cromwell. Scotland had its legislature in one assembly, composed of lords and commons. Its history is filled with deeds of violence done by the aristocratic power, and it shows an almost uninterrupted struggle between the king and the nobles for the government of the country. The Venetians fell under one of the most terrible despotisms that ever crushed a people, by the legislative and executive power being engrossed by one senatorial body.

The North American provinces, where there exists the most perfect state of democracy, have their legislative body

divided into two chambers. The French since their revolution have adopted the same plan. In fine, a division of the legislative faculty into two deliberative assemblies, with a veto on their proceedings by the executive authority, is really essential to the existence of the liberties of a people.* Therefore let King, Lords, and Commons, as established by the theory of the constitution, continue to form the government of the country. But in the election of the peers, the principle adopted for the cases of Scotland and Ireland, would appear to be more agreeable to the law of common sense, than the hereditary principle as established in England. Should extra-constitutional force ever be applied in this country, it is probable that the elective principle will be at once introduced into the senate, the same as in the popular branch of the legislature.

But in the mean while, every effort will require to be made by the people to get their subsistence freed from the clutches of the landed aristocratic power; and unless that be done, the exclamation may be made—"Fear not; England has a sufficiency for twelve millions of inhabitants—all the rest must perish, and then there will be no scarcity of bread!"

As it is for the preservation of the liberties of the people, that the legislative body should be divided into two independent sections, and that the sovereign should possess the power of controlling both, by means of a veto on their proceedings—so, also, it is for the safety of the sovereign, that

* The instinct of mankind in these matters, leads to a division of the legislative power. We perceive this through the whole of that part of America formerly colonies of Spain. In the schedules of the laws of those republics from Chile to Texas, we find the following principle laid down :— "The legislative power shall reside in a Chamber of Deputies and in a Senate, which shall compose the General Congress."

the upper branch, or aristocratic power, do not domineer over the great mass of his subjects. This usurped power, either in the form of direct privileges, or immunities at the expense of the body of the people, or through a secret influence by corrupt practices, is sure to operate to the disadvantage of the sovereign. The fact is, the sovereign is made the tool of the dominant faction, without his being aware of it; and he incurs the odium of measures, from which he really derives no benefit, but for which he takes upon himself a heavy responsibility. The sovereign is the most prominent person in the state, and, in times of convulsion, is the first who is assailed.

The fate of Louis XVI., of France, will illustrate the case of a patriotic and benign monarch, having been mistaken for the author of miseries, which resulted from the long-continued acts of a selfish and corrupt Aristocracy.

The power wielded by an oligarchy can be disguised in such a manner, as not to be perceived till the blow actually falls on the victims—but the power, however great, of one individual, whether under the title of emperor, king, doge, or president, can be limited by law or custom, and his duties and prerogatives, even to matters of etiquette, can be defined with perfect precision. In constitutional governments, the great personal power of the sovereign is tempered by the responsibility that attaches to the ministers and secretaries, whom the sovereign is bound to employ.

In Great Britain, the most ambitious and unprincipled minister would not dare to commit the sovereign to any acts which clearly were a breach of the law, that fixed and defined his power and prerogatives under the constitution; nor would he cause the House of Commons to set aside the rules, which a long course of precedents had established for its practice in the routine of legislation. But the same

minister will perhaps introduce to his sovereign, a House of Commons, as the representatives of the people, that he knows, from his own experience of election-proceedings, has been assembled under circumstances of such corruption, and such "Judas-like bribery," as to shock the moral feelings of the people; and even to equal in profligacy the most corrupt practices of the Roman Aristocracy in the last days of the Roman constitution. And yet this minister, who commits a species of treason to his sovereign, by taking advantage of her youth and inexperience, and trusting to the generosity of her character, has the power of controlling the subsistence, and of trenching on the liberties, of every individual in the British dominions!

The history of the aristocratic power in Great Britain, down to the present times, is a department of national history of the utmost importance to the people of this country.

For several centuries after the conquest in the year 1066, the inhabitants of England were divided into two classes only, namely, masters and slaves; and the following account of the state of Europe about that period, will apply to the British Islands: "Fierceness, violence, and rapine prevailed in the absence of social order and morals. Private war desolated Europe; the nobles were robbers, and most castles were but dens of thieves and receptacles of plunder. Churchmen, as well as laymen, held their estates by return of military service."* But churchmen did not like to shed blood; hence the use by them of clubs in battle, and afterwards of fire to consume heretics!—the tender mercies of the men of God!

"The villains and slaves were out of the jurisdiction of courts of justice—they had no rights, no possessions, but

* Mill's Hist. of the Crusades, vol. i. p. 30.

were in every respect considered as cattle. If any person should harbour the villains of another lord, and refuse to render them, the injured lord ought forcibly to enter the lands of the wrong-doer, and seize the villain. If any male villain married a female villain without consent of her lord, the lord of the male villain was compelled to give to the other lord a villain of equal age with her who had been married; but if the parties had been united with the consent of the lord of the female villain, then no return could be demanded.”* These were the laws as practised in Palestine by the military chiefs, on their serfs and followers; and such were the laws, with very little difference, in England about the same period. It is singular that it did not occur to the military churchmen of the Crusades, to retain possession of the Holy Land by partially following the example of Moses, and giving the “villains” some interest in the country, in the shape of small allotments of land: but very few of these club-armed priests were able to read, and, perhaps, all that they knew of the laws of Moses, was the regulation for the tithes of the produce of land.

The villains were, however, mere slavish instruments in the hands of the lay or clerical military chiefs, and were fed for their services, on the principle of feeding the oxen for the sake of the field required to be cultivated.

As late as towards the end of the fifteenth century, the celebrated Earl of Warwick, known in English history as the “*King-maker*,” maintained, it is said, no less than 30,000 men at his tables, in his different castles. This fact at once explains the secret of his power of king-making, for, by withholding for one day the food from his followers, he was sure of getting them to do, the day following, whatever he wanted them to do. In those days of barbarous

* Mill's Hist. of the Crusades.

aristocratic power, the slavish followers would dethrone their sovereign, to gratify the man who fed them. What is to be admired in the history of the Earl of Warwick, is, that he possessed the self-denial of refraining from putting the crown upon his own head.

When great numbers of slaves have contrived to emancipate themselves, and endeavoured to improve their own condition, and to raise their fellows from bondage, society assumes another aspect, and political parties begin to move and agitate the affairs of the country. These political parties assume or receive distinctive names. It is only within these last two hundred years, that the history of this country has presented features of marked interest for the great body of the people. Even during the reign of Elizabeth, an epoch glorious in English history, the people were of little consideration, if we may judge by the passive character of their representatives in parliament, where the liberty of speech consisted merely of the words "Ay" or "No," to the edicts presented by the sovereign. But it must be borne in mind, that the people were of no political consequence, and they were also kept down by monopolies, which only wanted the article "bread" to fill up the list of everything of necessary use. The monopoly of bread in favour of a party was reserved to the nineteenth century.

However, as regarded the revenue for the expenses of government, the industry of the people was comparatively free, down to the breaking out of the civil war, as the public revenue was raised chiefly by a land-tax, a tax on property in different shapes, and duties on merchandise. The illegal system of taxation of Charles the First brought matters to an issue in the country.

As the civil war threw business of all kinds out of course, the revenue raised, by the popular party, for its support

were from irregular sources—part from monthly assessments on landed and personal property; from the customs; from the excise on domestic productions; from weekly collections of provisions for the soldiers; and from the sale of church, crown, and other property.*

When the excise duties were first put on by authority of parliament, to carry on the war against the King and Aristocracy, they were considered extremely odious by the people, who only submitted to them on account of the necessity of the case, and with the understanding that they were to be kept on only during the continuance of that necessity. But it is to be particularly remarked, that the parliament, on the restoration of Charles II., confirmed this most obnoxious tax on the consumption of the people; and hence the origin of the present system of taxation of food, and every article of comfort required by the industrious portion of the population of Great Britain and Ireland. The bit was inserted by the corrupt and subservient House of Commons, to gratify the monarch restored to the throne; and the aristocratic party, ever since, has by it curbed the people, and thrown from their own lands and property, burdens which must *now* be replaced. Under the first excise law, the taxes on land still amounted to about a fourth of the whole expenditure of the government, although that was a proportion much under what ought to have contributed to the expenses of the State.

During the reign of that wretched king, James II., the landed aristocratic power voted an annual revenue upwards of two millions sterling, *without* including the tax at all upon land. But William III. who succeeded the abdicated throne of James, passed, in

* The most singular tax was that of one penny per head on the inhabitants of London, during the administration of Charles II.

vious 100-120 per cent. on the rental of land and 200 per cent. on personal property, and twenty per cent. on sales. During the reign of William, more than a fourth of the public revenue was raised from land-tax. At that time the whole revenue was about £1,500,000, of which the tax on land was about £1,300,000.

In the year 1842 the total amount of revenue to the Government was £2,100,000, of which the taxes on land amount to less than £1,200,000.

Before proceeding farther, a pause must be made here to consider this statement. There is a great depth of meaning in it. Land and fixed property in a country, are the objects for the protection of which government is chiefly instituted, and on them, as the legitimate basis, the great burden of taxation rests. Among all nations, ancient and modern, such has been the case. In ancient Egypt a land tax of twenty in the hundred was levied by the government. Moses, by the command of God, imposed a land tax of the same amount for the maintenance of the religious, civil, and military institutions of the Jews. The ancient Romans established a tax of ten in the hundred on the produce of agriculture, and of twenty in the hundred on vineyards and gardens. In the British empire in India about two-thirds of the public revenue are raised from the produce of the soil. The constitutional law of England, down to the

By the constitutional law of England, down to the Revolution of 1688, land bore the principal burdens of the state; and indeed, the lands were assigned to the proprietors by

tea, coffee, butter, cheese, and other articles of
ple, £16,000,000; on British spirits £5,400,000;
00; on wine £1,840,000. Can any human being
us accumulation of property in the hands of the
e poverty of the industrious classes, after consider-
stem continued through two or three generations.

the conqueror, on the express condition of bearing the expense of government either by personal service, or by substitution of payment of taxes. In the modern nations of Europe the great portion of the public expenses of government is defrayed from land-taxes: taking the most powerful nations we have,

	Land and property tax.	Other taxes.
In France . .	£23,200,000 —	£17,500,000
Prussia . . .	3,990,000 —	3,667,000
Austria . .	8,795,000 —	7,700,000

But in Great Britain, the most wealthy of all European nations, we have land-taxes £1,200,000 other taxes £51,000,000 !

Let the 27,000,000 of men, women, and children, in the islands of Great Britain and Ireland, rivet their attention on these statements, and inquire why should such inequality exist? The £51,000,000 are made up of

Taxes on food, drinkables, and on articles of raw material,	£39,000,000
Duties on transfer of property, <i>not lands</i> , and taxes on industry and on prudence—stamps on mercantile transactions,	7,000,000
Taxes on windows of houses—Post Office—Duties on horses, carriages, servants; and other assessed taxes,	5,000,000
Total,	£51,000,000

The landed Aristocracy, that make the laws for this great manufacturing and commercial nation, tax themselves to the amount of only about two and one-third per cent. of the national burdens; while they tear from the subsistence, or tax the industry of the people, to the amount of ninety-

seven and two-thirds per cent! Scarcely one person out of a hundred is aware of the real state of the case, and hence the apathy of the people. This is a question of the greatest personal interest to every individual, however humble, in the United Kingdom, and it is of vast importance to the farming, manufacturing, commercial, shipping, banking, and every other interest in the country.

How does it happen, that each and all of these interests are successively, or almost at times simultaneously, in a state of depression and apparent decay? And how comes it that the landed interest, or, in other words, the few hundred families that form the legislature, flourish amid the universal distress, and year after year, and generation after generation, become richer in lands, houses, and stock, as the property of the other classes diminishes, and the labour of the poor man, by all his efforts, cannot supply him with food?

It will be again said, by the supporters of the present system, that the legislators are not exempted from the operation of their own laws, and, as consumers, are subject to the same duties on their corn, sugar, and beer, as the poor artisans of Manchester or Paisley, or as the miserable agricultural labourer on his 7s. to 10s. a week! But it is really mockery to justify our fiscal laws, by pleading the liability of their makers to these laws. The class of men who are the law-makers are few in number, but of great value as proprietors; they tax themselves as consumers, but, from the smallness of their numbers, contribute little to the revenue; and they keep their property, which would give a great deal, free from all burdens.

We have to look to this source for the cause of the distresses of the country. Common sense will at once teach men, that when consumption is thus severely taxed for a

nation, but which, together with other circumstances, tended to increase and consolidate the power and influence of the aristocratic party, and proportionably to weaken the popular cause. These two sovereigns were foreigners by birth, and aliens to the habits and feelings of British men. They were Germans, in constitution, character, and prejudices, and therefore incompetent to govern a great nation like Great Britain and Ireland, the inhabitants of which were composed of materials so different from those of a contracted continental principality.

As the members of families only of rank and influence in the country, approach and surround the throne, a foreigner called to be king, must necessarily at first receive all his information, and take all his impressions, from the persons who come in daily communication with him. Hence his dependence on them, and hence the danger of his acting upon partial representations of the state of the country, and its interests. He is apt to lean on individuals, who soon learn to make themselves agreeable and even necessary to him, in his conduct of affairs. His weak points are soon discovered, and seized on by those who surround him, and turned to personal or party advantage. These few words explain the principles of danger, which lie hid within the limits of a court, to the cause of the liberty and the property of a nation.

Under the two first Georges, therefore, we find, from the history of the country, that the aristocratic party, by means of a hired and corrupt majority in the legislature, pursued a course of policy in foreign relations, adapted to gratify the desires, and even to humour the prejudices, of kings who were German in their hearts and predilections.

The English people, besides being taxed enormously, to promote the German schemes and alliances of George I.,

had the mortification of being laughed at by all the world for their simplicity. He actually was permitted by the parliament, to add to his continental possessions by purchase with English money. As early as 1719, it was said that "Great Britain had become the ally to the whole world, and a bubble to all its allies." The House of Commons voted 4,000 additional seamen, to secure Bremen and Verden to the Hanoverian possessions; and, in 1727, decided to support the King in all attempts to maintain the integrity of his German dominions. Even fifteen years later, under the second George, the measures of the ministry had been regulated by the interests of the electoral dominions, which had become the gulf that swallowed up the treasures of Great Britain. This country was actually a dependency on the interests of Hanover, as the king and the venal parliaments gave preferable attention to the latter.

Had the people of this nation been consulted, they would have said to the king, "Make your election between your own limited territories, and this great nation, but we will not allow you to promote the interests of the first to our prejudice." How happy does it now appear for this country, that the salique law prevails in the electoral dominions! by which, under our present sovereign, we have got quit of a territory which entailed wars and all their miseries on this country. The first William Pitt was dismissed by George the Second, for opposing his German alliances: but he was shortly afterwards re-admitted into council, as his commanding talents could not be dispensed with.

It thus appears that the personal character and circumstances of the two first Georges, tended to increase and consolidate the power of the governing aristocratic party. But other events in the first half of the last century, lent their aid to the same end, and also to alarm the people of

The national debt at the termination of the American war of independence, amounted to about £250,000,000. The war cost about 120,000,000, incurred in an attempt to force the Americans to bear part of a taxation, the consequence of old Continental struggles, the object of which can only be ascertained by ransacking the secret archives of European cabinets.

The discoveries in machinery, the improvement of our manufactures, and the consequent extension of our commerce, since the accession of George the Third, enabled the citizens, from their increased means, to bear the taxation with comparative ease.* This was quickly perceived by the governing party, who, in a dishonest spirit, after having entered into that terrible struggle with France which has caused such miseries to this country, fixed by law a limit to the tax on land, and rated the amount at about the same as it had been ninety years before. The amount of land-tax to be for ever collected, was limited to about £2,000,000 a year, with the privilege of redemption by land-owners; and at the end of fifty years from the passing of the law, the amount, as already stated, has dwindled down to about £1,200,000. These facts cannot be too often repeated, and pressed on the attention of the people of this country.

The country became involved in a terrible war with the most powerful and enthusiastic nation in Europe, and it saw no prospect of a termination to it; but, on the contrary, the lives and properties of the existing generation appeared completely pledged in the struggle. And in such appalling circumstances, a law was made to limit the responsibility of the very men who led the country into them!

* And in this spirit of taxing industry, the landed interest, in the year 1791, passed a law *prohibiting* the importation of wheat into this country, if the price were below 54s. a quarter in the home market.

It is true, that the income-tax was laid on; but the land-owners virtually did not pay as much as the citizens who had no voice in the making of the law, and who derived their incomes from trade, to which they applied all their time and industry.

A war is a great calamity to a nation, however glorious its actions may be. It may be undertaken for objects in which the mass of the citizens have no interest—it may be entered into for purposes of mere personal ambition or privilege; but so awful are its consequences, that the parties, however unprincipled they may be who engage in it, are most particular in their manifestos in giving a colour of justice and self-defence to the enterprise into which they are about to lead so many millions of men. They so plan their schemes as to provoke their enemy to strike the first blow, in order to deceive the world into a belief that the real aggressors are beginning a just and defensive war. The first act of the war that commenced in 1792-3 appeared to be by France; but if the events that preceded the declaration of that country be examined, it will be found that the British aristocratic power was like the wolf towards the lamb in the fable.

But as soon as a country is engaged in actual hostilities, and the minds of the people become excited, the cause of the quarrel is generally lost sight of, and sympathy for our gallant sailors and soldiers, and aspirations for their success, take possession of the hearts of the citizens who remain protected at home. With respect to the men who really draw the sword and handle the musket, the sentiment of the gallant Blake, in the wars of Cromwell, inspires them in danger—"That it is still their duty to fight for their country, into what hands soever the government may fall."

to our sailors—the settlement of peace in 1815, without securing for our commerce those advantages, which so many sacrifices for foreign countries entitled us to demand—the establishment of laws, to restrict or even prohibit the introduction into the country of corn and other provisions—the entailment of a debt, the interest of which is now paid from the contribution of every poor man, woman, and child, in the shape of taxes on their bread, and on almost every article consumed by them—the establishment of a system of lavish expenditure in all departments of government—a pension-list of royal and noble paupers—and many other things which astonish the weak minds of sensitive people, both at home and abroad—all these events and acts may be supposed by the young students of British history, to have been performed and concluded by and with the consent and sanction of the people of this country, under its government of King, Lords, and Commons—the wonder of the world, and the envy of the surrounding nations. And that consequently the people must bear, without repining, the results of their own wisdom or their own folly.

It is true, that more than one hundred years previous to the year 1815, the British House of Commons was composed of several hundred men, who sat, talked, and made laws, and were seemingly the representatives of the so many millions of inhabitants of England, Wales, and Scotland, and of Ireland, since the beginning of this century.

These six hundred and fifty-eight men, who assembled in an old chapel at Westminster, were no more the representatives of the English, Scotch, and Irish people, than they were of the inhabitants of Hindostan; and indeed they might partly claim to be the representatives of some of the people of that far country, for some nabobs there, in pos-

session of English rotten boroughs, actually returned certain members to parliament.

Our young countryfolks must know, that, forty or fifty years ago, it was the fashion in high life, for families to have negroes for footmen. The taste has changed within these twenty years in this respect, and, what is worse, circumstances have so altered, that our white brethren at home would be glad to change places with negroes, as far as abundance of subsistence and comforts go. But the story goes, that a member of the Commons House boasted, from his knowledge of the system, that he could return his black footman to parliament, and maintain the legality of the election. It is to be wondered that the thing was not done at the period alluded to. Sambo, grinning his maiden speech, would really have been a picturesque object on the ministerial benches, in the latter days of Pitt, or under Liverpool, fixing the importation of wheat at 80s. a quarter.

There was even a degree of sublimity in the very abuses of our system: the genius of a political Milton might have become inspired by the subject, and have given to the world a poem on "Parliament Lost, and Liberty Regained." The pen drops from the hand, conscious of its inability to delineate the system—a system which a Wellington declared to be perfect, and incapable of improvement, and which Peel defended with all that energy and oratorical flourish characteristic of a man in dread of the ruin of his country by some humble but honest countryman acquiring the right to give an independent vote. This system put at defiance all rule, and it could be reduced to no principles of population, property, or moral character of the inhabitants, as the basis of the representation: and yet it was a system of perfection in the estimation of those parties who

- had the working of it. It was even maintained that it was the *cause* of the greatness and prosperity of the British nation. But the people themselves, by their activity and intelligent perseverance, were the cause or moving-spring of the greatness of the country, and they prospered *in spite* of every dead-weight laid on them, and against every drawback.

In sketching the outlines of the system of representation, let a map of Great Britain be supposed to be open. We will take the two extremities of the island, to begin with—the county of Cornwall in the south-west, and the whole of the ancient kingdom of Scotland in the north. Although neither size nor population were considered, it may be well to compare the two places mentioned; the population of 1811 is taken in both. Cornwall contained about 852,000 acres, and 216,000 population; Scotland contained about 19,700,000 acres, 1,810,000 population. But Cornwall returned to parliament forty-two members, and Scotland forty-five members: the Cornish were—from boroughs forty, and from the county two. It is not worth the trouble to inquire to whom the boroughs belonged: the men sent to parliament were not the representatives of the inhabitants of those places, but were merely the nominees of certain individuals who made a business of the system.* The inhabitants of Cornwall, generally, are a useful and hard-working class of people, engaged in digging for copper and tin in the bowels of the earth. No rational person will maintain that they required forty-two men to represent their

* Even in the reign of that fanatical tyrant James II. the representation of Cornwall was made an instrument of the Court. Among the events and occurrences of 1685, there is the following observations in Wade's British History: "In Cornwall, the Earl of Bath put the names of the Officers of the Guards in most of the charters of that county, so that the king was sure of forty-four votes on all occasions."

interests in the legislature, even supposing that the forty-two members had been legitimately elected. The people of Scotland have the reputation of possessing as much shrewdness as any portion of the citizens of this country, and are certainly as capable of knowing a hawk from a handsaw, as any of the six hundred and fifty-eight men who every five or seven years assembled as the representatives of the nation. The most remarkable circumstance of the whole system was, the mockery that was made of this sagacious people through their representative system, during a period of about a hundred years. They were told that the forty-five men, who appeared in every parliament, were their representatives; while it was an established fact, at the beginning of the present century, that one person, a member of the government of the time, returned thirty-nine out of that number. This individual was Lord Melville, who was one of the very few public men against whom a direct responsibility was fixed, by his lordship being brought to a solemn public trial for peculation, and other crimes against the Treasury.—The total number of electors, throughout all Scotland, was only 2340, and these were split into a number of self-elected corporations, perfectly irresponsible to the public. The town-council of Edinburgh, consisting of about thirty individuals, tradesmen of that city, nominated the favourite of the minister of the day, as the representative of that enlightened city. The Scotch members were proverbially mere political tools in the hands of the government, without a spirit or conscience of their own, and the English people, accustomed since the Union to see men come up from the north, of the most pliant dispositions, mistook them for the representatives of the people; and as travelling in those days was rare, they attached to the nation a character of subserviency which strictly belonged

only to the political nominees of some men of power. Hence the origin of those libels and caricatures of the Scottish character, that appeared about the middle of last century, which even to this day are entertained by the vulgar and ill-informed. The English knew themselves, and were too well aware of the nature of their own mock-representation, to be accountable for the political corruption of their legislators.

Old Sarum, Gatton, Appleby, Midhurst, and more than fifty other boroughs, without importance, and many without houses or inhabitants, were monuments of the wisdom of bygone ages, and of existing perfection. Old Sarum consisted of some old mounds and thorn bushes, and returned two members; and so on with the rest. Borough property, or property invested with legislative power, was invaluable; and it is said that Napoleon contemplated the purchase of some, in order to secure votes in the British parliament. Anything strange is credible of those times!

The extravagant proportion of men sent to Parliament from Cornwall—the gross system of misrepresentation of Scotland—the barbarity displayed in the cases of Gatton and other extinct constituencies—the vested right in the elective franchise in counties and towns—were all crowned with the monster-abuse of the populous, wealthy, and intelligent manufacturing districts being entirely destitute of representation in the legislature; and whose interests, of immense value, were left in consequence to the mercy of political adventurers, who received their pay and their opinions from their titled patrons, and who appeared as the representatives of Cornwall or of Caithness. A man, even of mature age, awakens as if from a dream, on recollecting that it is only ten years since Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, Sheffield, Wolverhampton, Bolton, Blackburn, Old-

ham, Halifax, Macclesfield, Stockport, and thirty other industrious and wealthy communities, were allowed to return members to represent their affairs in Parliament. The population of the eleven places enumerated, was 824,607 souls in the year 1831, and of the other thirty towns and districts, 1,728,900 souls, of whom about 990,000 belonged to the metropolitan districts. There were thus 2,553,500 of the most productive and intelligent of the population, who had no voice in the making of the laws, and who had no legitimate organ through which to make their grievances known to the government of the country. It is, at the present time of manufacturing and commercial embarrassment and distress, of the utmost importance to keep these facts in view before the public. An individual may for many years pursue a course of conduct without experiencing the loss or ruin which such conduct carries along with it—and a nation may, for half a century, bear up under unjust and impolitic laws, without feeling the painful effects of them. The important thing is to trace evils to their source ; and as soon as the cause is clearly ascertained, the cure can be commenced with confidence. On applying the plainest common sense to this question, will any person be surprised at a decadence or loss of trade—at poverty, distress, and destitution spreading with rapid strides among a dense population—when it is considered that the laws by which this great manufacturing and commercial people are governed, were made by a class of men who knew little, and who did not wish to know much, of the interests of this people, and who with ignorance and prejudice were wont to look down on them, and with sneers call them a “swinish multitude,” the “unwashed,” with other epithets of scorn and contempt !

As the time is approaching for a great change in the

system of policy for this country, it is fit and proper that a responsibility be fastened on some system, or some class of the population, for the consequences that now fall upon the community; and in order to fix this responsibility, the following statement of the general plan of the parliamentary representation during the great revolutionary war, and down to the year 1832, is submitted—

Members returned to Parliament, supposed to	
have been the representatives of the people of	
England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland . . .	658
Returned as follows:—	
By 80 or 90 Peers, for England and Wales . . .	218
By 20 to 25 Peers, for Scotland	31
By 32 to 36 Peers, for Ireland	51
	— 300
By 90 Commoners, for England and Wales . . .	137
By 14 Commoners, for Scotland	14
By 19 Commoners, for Ireland	20
By Government	16
	— 187
Returned by nomination of individuals . . .	487
Leaving 171 members returned by constituencies	
not altogether dependent on patrons . . .	171
	— *658

The total number of British peers, exclusive of the Scotch and Irish peers, is 494; of this number, the large proportion of 430 have been created since the year 1700, leaving 64 as the number composing the House of Peers at the revolution of 1688. It is scarcely worth while to

* The Black Book.

inquire whether this great increase be in proportion to the general increase of the population in the same period ; but one fact is established by it, namely, that the British peerage is one of the most modern date.

It is one of the most singular traits in the English character—a character marked with the most manly lines, and imbued with a noble spirit of independence—to find men bending, as it were, their minds to a few fellow-citizens, the instant that they change their names, or get them disguised under some title, which perhaps has no connection with the circumstances that caused those citizens to be taken notice of by the executive magistrate. But, when it is considered that those individuals, who have perhaps worked their way from small beginnings, and wormed themselves into the favour of the minister of the day, acquire, in virtue of this talismanic change of appellation, a power to tax their less clever or less pliant brethren, and use it too to their own advantage,—the circumstance is extraordinary, and can only be explained by that proneness of the human mind, groping in darkness, to fall down before the idol which superstition has raised from the ground.

There is in old names a prescription which is natural, and may be beneficial, to society. The advantage of a descent from ancestors long favourably known to the neighbourhood, or to the country is considerable. The living representatives of the family, and even the collateral branches of it, feel themselves responsible for the name, and, in addition to the common principles of religion and morality, they have the motive to good conduct, in the desire to maintain the reputation gained from the dead. Who can tell how many young men of humble origin, thrown on the world, filling the ranks of our army and navy, spread over the globe, are sustained under temptation, and

preserved from dishonourable deeds, by the memory of the name of their father, who dropped into the grave after a life of honest fame?*

There are names in all countries which may be denominated historical names, and, according to the nature of the events with which they are associated, bring disgrace or honour on the country that claims them; but the most of historico-political names of the semibarbarous ages are so associated with conspiracies, treasons, and rebellions, for personal objects, that the reputation which they have left is of a very doubtful nature.

But the business of this treatise is to deal with substances, and not with names. It will be seen, from what has been stated, that more than half of the entire peerage has been created since the beginning of the reign of George the Third, and indeed it may be said, from the year 1800. It is the most upstart hereditary legislative body in the world—ridiculously so; and it becomes a subject of the most curious speculation to inquire, how a few hundred individuals, without historical names or associations, should possess such an influence and power of taxation over the vast body of citizens, of whom they were lately members, distinguished chiefly for their hostility to their own class of society.

The truth is, the British peerage is a species of club, or political corporation, held together on the principles of Free-Masonry, and a person admitted into it, at once, and by instinct, acquires the spirit of the order. The number of the members being small, insures an extraordinary

* It is honourable, as it is gratifying, to know that in almost all countries, especially in this country, the names whose glory in literature and science will last through all ages, and shine on the countries that produced them, have belonged to citizens generally of the middle or lower classes of society.

degree of union, and, on any point touching the security or privileges of the order, the members are like a body animated by one soul. There is, however, fortunately for the great mass of the people, a division of opinion among the members of this political association, or, more properly speaking, the members cannot agree on the appropriation of offices of power, profit, and honour. This causes a competition for public power, by which the people are benefited. So far as opinion goes to support public men, offers of service are raised in amount by competitors to secure that opinion in their favour.

The power of the British aristocratic legislative body, lies in its enormous wealth, divided among a small number of persons. This wealth, through the medium of laws most cunningly devised, accumulates in a geometrical ratio, at the same time that the property of all other classes of society has a tendency to decrease, under the action of those laws. This power has acquired a strength and consistency, since the beginning of the reign of George the Third, unexampled in the history of the world, and which has been gained from the extraordinary advance of this country in manufactures and commerce, since the improvement of the steam-engine by James Watt. The application of that machinery, by Richard Arkwright, to the manufacture of cotton, was followed up successfully by other persons, among whom was Robert Peel, who promoted the interests of his country by his manufacturing enterprise, and laid up a princely fortune for his own family.

It will be found, that no interest in this country has increased in magnitude and value, so much as the property of the legislating class of the population, since the country has attained its height of manufacturing and commercial greatness; and for this reason—that the accumulation of

Moses, for the great object of his dispensation, found it necessary to establish the law of primogeniture; but it would appear, that he was perfectly alive to the effect which it was likely to produce on the hearts of the Israelites—hence, no doubt, the motives for the severity of the following enactments:—"And he that curseth his father and his mother, shall surely be put to death;"* and even age was to be specially respected; "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God."†

It must be admitted, that the patience of expectants of the lands and titles of British peers is long tried. I have before me a list of the names of fifty-nine members of the House of Peers, living at the same time, theages of whom are from seventy-two to ninety-two years each. That number is a little more than the tenth part of the whole number of the peers. This great age of such a large proportion of men, is very remarkable. In the population of England, the proportion of those above seventy years of age living at the same time, is not a twentieth part. But in some localities the proportion is much less, and in the dense manufacturing towns, there is a melancholy disparity. In Manchester, with a population of 192,000 souls, there were living in 1841, only 2891 men and women of seventy years and upwards—this is just equal to one and a half per cent. of the whole population.‡

It is well that practical conclusions, useful to the people of this country, should be drawn from such facts as these. There is an assembly of men, living beyond the usual period of human existence, in the enjoyment of every blessing which this world can afford, and in whose personal experience, except for gratification, hunger and thirst, cold

* Ex. xxi. v. 17. † Lev. ix. v. 32. ‡ See Facts and Figures, iv. p. 56.

and nakedness, distress and care, are all unknown, sitting as legislators for a population exposed at times to those evils in an intense degree, and without the means of alleviation. It is evident, that there can be no reciprocity of feeling, or sympathy, between a body of law-makers, such as described, and the masses of people whose interests, safety, and even existence, depend on their decisions. Many of these hereditary law-makers for the people of the British islands are alien in their tastes and habits, and their domestic servants are actually foreigners. And some of them, from their luxurious retreats in Italy or Turkey, will dictate, through their proxies at home, votes to tax the subsistence of the inhabitants of Manchester and Paisley ! Hence the ignorance, and the hardness of feeling, so often displayed in a hereditary legislature, and opinions are sometimes uttered by men of great name, when discussing subjects of trade or fiscal arrangements, which excite pity or astonishment.

But if it be true, or even probable, that the law of primogeniture produces a deteriorating effect on the domestic affections of legislators, it need not cause surprise to find, in their proceedings towards the people, a harshness and selfishness ; and there are, in the history and state of English aristocratic legislation, a cupidity, a meanness, and an hypocrisy, which are scarcely to be equalled in the laws of any other people. This is not vague assertion, or wild declamation, but it is demonstrated by the statistics of church-property and of public charities—by the evasion of just claims on land and other property belonging to the legislating class—by the state of mining laws, allowing the concealed existence of a species of slavery of women and children, compared with which, negro-bondage is a

the taxation on their articles of food and drink amounts to a considerable part of the revenue of the empire; and were they to come to an understanding, and resolve to abstain for one year from the use of articles which are of a pernicious nature, many noble persons would at the end of the year be short of their pensions from the Treasury.

Our people are said to be addicted to drinking; but is there any very ardent desire in the government to check this disposition, while a ninth part of the gross revenue of the country is derived from a duty on 21,000,000 gallons of home-made spirits, besides spirits of foreign manufacture. A system is here under consideration, and the influence of that system on the conduct of individuals is noticed, and reflecting on the whole of its tendency it may be pronounced, that except by pressure from without, drunkenness, ignorance, and demoralization among our people, will be permitted to continue, rather than taxes should be laid on land and other property of the legislating class of the population.

It is the nature of aristocratic bodies to assume a high tone, which is shown in the titles and decorations of the individuals composing the order. A constant endeavour is kept up, to impose on all who are not received into the order, a belief that it would be unsafe to the community to allow any encroachment on its privileges, and that the members of the order are the proper and only persons to be intrusted with power, and to fill situations of profit and honour. The facts, which have been adduced in the course of this work, and the tendency which has been shown to encroachments on the property and rights of others by dominant bodies in the country, must be left to make their impressions against the assumptions and dashing claims of such parties.

The great aristocratic party is divided into two factions, who, on some points, are opposed in principle, but generally only differ in degree on questions of the most vital importance to the vast majority of the people. The difference is chiefly perceived in the opinions of the party that struggles to supplant the other in possession of the government. In speeches in and out of parliament, and in the paid organs of the daily press, offers are made for the public favour, and promises of improved measures are freely proffered, to secure the suffrages of electors. One party generally bids higher than the other; but for the last one hundred and fifty years, the reforms which have been carried through for the benefit of the popular cause have been the result of the persevering endeavours of the people themselves, to frighten the legislature into measures of improvement.

But, as the real state of our fiscal regulations has evidently never been understood, the most crying evil of all is still in existence, namely, the heavy and unequally distributed load of taxation. However, the attention of the people is now awakened to this subject, and is sure to lead to a great change in the system. Were it not for the activity and intelligence of the people, acting incessantly upon the legislature and the government, it would be of very little importance whether the few hundred men denominated Tories, or the like number called Whigs, were in possession of the keys of the Treasury. They both agree in keeping up the system as it exists, and neither will consent to touch with a pruning hand the tree of withering influence on the industry of the country. One section of the dominant class represents more of the opinions of the dark ages than the other, and, if left entirely to itself, would crush all under its iron rod. The other section professes more liberality, and it claims the merit of those changes which have contributed to the freedom of the nation, but it

As we are approaching the grand finale, it is proper to give these details, in order that a correct opinion may be formed of the question, which is now occupying the thoughts of the great and noble of the land. Hunger and misery have driven the labouring classes in the manufacturing districts into insurrection; and can any person of rational mind be surprised at such a state of things under laws which tax *every mouthful* of food, except turbot and lobsters!

It is strange that this country should find in Russia and Mexico, prototypes or imitators of her policy; but so it is. These two nations are contrasts to each other in many particulars; but it will be admitted on all hands, that neither can be held forth as a model for this country. Each has, round all its borders, planted the standard of seclusion from intercourse with civilized people. The world knows what Russia has been, what she is—but no one can predict what she will be. Mexico, with a churlish temper refuses to admit the commerce of England, France, and other nations, or only admits it on conditions which neutralize the benefit. She wants to make herself a manufacturing country, and fixes her tariff accordingly; but foreign cotton, in any shape, is to her an abomination—the raw material is prohibited, and cotton yarn is charged with a prohibitive duty. In articles of food, the spirit of monopoly rages, and *absolute* prohibition of introduction is passed on the following articles:—Wheat, and all kinds of grain and seed, wheat, flour, rice, sugar of all sorts, coffee, molasses, common salt, starch, aniseed, and salted pork. The Mexicans are a singular people. About twenty years ago, they borrowed large sums of money of wealthy and credulous citizens of this country, and after a suspension of the payment of interest, and a state of insolvency for many years, a people

in possession of the richest silver and gold mines in the world, are now paying dribbling instalments to account of their debt! The author of these pages, from a residence of several years, retains many agreeable reminiscences of that interesting country, and, with a desire for its welfare, he points out what he conceives to be a fatal error in its policy.

One party in England wishes to deceive itself into the belief, that the distresses of the country are only of a temporary nature, or from causes different from laws restrictive of food. It so happens, that several circumstances have met, about the same time, to aggravate the distress by deranging, and in some cases almost destroying, certain branches of trade. But statistical facts are very stubborn things, and there is the melancholy proof from them, of a change in the proportions and relations of things, which denote a decadence, or increasing debility, in the national resources. It is established, that within the last twenty years, the increase of the population has been in a less ratio than during the previous twenty years—and also that the rate of mortality has increased on the average of the population. But in the analysis of the returns, it is found, that the decrease of people, and the increase in the rate of mortality, have fallen among classes exposed to the depression of trade, and to the scarcity and dearth of food.—“When, therefore, we consider that these causes have increased the proportional number of deaths in England, at least 10 per cent. since 1820, and $4\frac{3}{16}$ per cent. during the last year alone, and in some counties upwards of 19 per cent. in the one period, and 25 in the other;—it surely becomes a matter of the gravest importance to ascertain whence they have arisen, and how their recurrence may be prevented; and it is also a subject of solemn and anxious inquiry for our statesmen, how it is

CHAP. IV.

THE DISTURBING FORCES OF ARISTOCRATIC POWER, IN THE ECONOMY OF SOCIETY.

DEVOURING PRINCIPLES—POLITICAL ECONOMY MUST FIRST MOVE PERSONS
BEFORE IT CAN APPLY ITS PRINCIPLES—THE POLITICAL PART OF THE SCIENCE
IS NECESSARY—DISTURBING FORCES IN SOCIETY—COUNTERACTING FORCES
—THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF SMITH, M'CULLOCH, AND CHALMERS—PRIN-
CIPLES OF TAXATION LAID DOWN BY SMITH—STEAM POWER IS THE EXPAN-
SION OR ENLARGEMENT OF LABOUR—DR. CHALMERS' ECONOMICS OF "LIMI-
TATIONS"—HIS OPINION ADVERSE TO RESTRICTIONS ON THE CORN-TRADE.*

IN an island of the ocean, there was a school or society of young persons of both sexes, of various ages, and of different capacities corporeal and mental. This little society was in itself a fair representation, in miniature, of a

* This and the following chapter were written after the reading of "Political Economy in connection with the Moral State and Moral Prospects of Society," by Thomas Chalmers, D. D. Professor of Divinity in the University of Edinburgh. That work is the production of a man of great fame as a divine, and a writer on economical subjects appertaining to the condition of the British nation: it appeared at a time when a great change was on the point of completion in the political circumstances of the country, and it contains the well-weighed opinions of the author on questions which in the present day are engaging the attention of every person, and exciting a degree of interest never before experienced in this country. The humble individual who presumes to pass a review on that work of Dr. Chalmers, applies to the subject the plain sense which a little observation of the world has afforded him.

large national community. The members of it had their respective tasks to perform, and duties to discharge, and the efficiency and willingness with which they accomplished them, were remarked by all observers. A more orderly, docile, and well-disposed society, scarcely any other parish could present. Withal, the members of it were very spirited, whenever any encroachments were made by other societies, and they defended themselves like little heroes on such occasions. There were three cakes, of different materials and of sufficient bulk for the whole community, to be shared at stated periods among the members, in portions according to the sex, age, and strength of each; and extra-allowances were to be made for meritorious conduct. But a certain part of these cakes was cut off, and retained as a fund from which to reward persons, who were employed to prevent strangers from disturbing the society, to keep the premises in good repair, and to preserve order. The cakes were kept in the possession of three individuals belonging to the society, and the distribution made by them to the various classes composing it. It is not necessary to relate where or in what way these three persons became possessed of the cakes, and of the power of apportioning them to the members or citizens. It is sufficient to state, that they stood in the relation of, and were considered trustees for, the society, and they took upon themselves the charge of making rules for, and of instructing, their associates.

After a time, a very great change took place in the circumstances and appearance of the different sections of the small community. The most of the members fell off in flesh, became pale and sickly; and it was remarked by observers, that they waited impatiently for the hours of distribution of cake; and tears were seen to start in the eyes of the weaker and younger people on receiving their allow-

Mr. M'Culloch describes it as "the science of the laws which regulate the production, distribution, and consumption of those articles or products, that have exchangeable value, and are, at the same time, necessary, useful, or agreeable to man." *

Dr. Chalmers says, "Political Economy aims at the diffusion of sufficiency and comfort throughout the mass of the population, by a multiplication or enlargement of the outward means and materials of human enjoyment." And he adds, "Now, we hold it to be demonstrable, on its own principles, that, vary its devices and expedients as it may, this is an object which it never can secure apart from a virtuous and educated peasantry." †

The political part of this science is not sufficiently attended to. The disturbing forces of society are lost sight of in the disquisition, or they are left to be dealt with by the general historian. The greater part of books on Political Economy is composed of reasonings on certain abstract principles applied to man in society, as if he had the world before him, where to choose a locality in which to develop his powers free from restraint—or made up of rules and directions to remove impediments, or to overturn barriers, in the way of providing for the people "a plentiful subsistence," or "a sufficiency of comfort." Now, all this is to toil in a circle, unless an influence or coercion be first used over the individuals who placed those impediments, or raised those barriers, in the way of the people in their efforts to provide themselves with articles or products of consumption. How can a country have a virtuous and educated peasantry, if the men who make the laws and

* M'Culloch's edition of Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, p. 187.

† Dr. Chalmers' *Political Economy*, in connection with the *Moral State and Prospects of Society*.—Preface.

possess the property of the country, believe that it would be dangerous to give education to the peasantry—education, in the proper meaning of the term. The evidence on the state of the colliers in the mining districts, lays bare a mass of ignorance, and a condition of physical degradation of men, women, and children, for which the owners of the mines, men of high rank and title, must yet answer at the bar of public opinion. It is not yet fifty years since the colliers of Scotland were in the condition of actual slaves of the soil: they could not leave the districts to which they belonged; and the mines were sold with so many labourers attached to them!

The hurricane that swept over England in the year 1066, has left its ravages on every acre of land in the country to this day. William the Conqueror seized the lands, and made his laws in spite of the principles of political economy. Now-a-days, matters are arranged differently. The descendants of the followers of that successful adventurer, and new men become rich by trade, and noble by a patent from a Secretary of State, do not muster their vassals, fed on the produce of their estates, and parade them to the alarm of peaceable citizens, but collect their tenants at elections, bribe them with money or drink, or intimidate them for their votes by the threat of expulsion from their farms, or of a rise of rent. The votes of such men are disturbing forces in the legislature to turn away the soundest principles of political economy, if adverse, or if to a narrow comprehension they appear to be adverse, to existing interests. The disturbing forces of this nature can only be neutralized by the votes of a virtuous and educated people; and let the middle classes of this great nation be alive to the truth, that a virtuous and educated order of peasantry and labourers, and, if moral and enlightened, then a well-fed order will

"destruction" refer, in such an observation? It cannot mean self-destruction—for who ever heard of a people committing suicide?

Dr. Chalmers is in one respect quite sensible, that without application to personal feelings and restraint, all economic principles and enlargements are useless: he says—
"We look for our common deliverance in a moral change, and not in any, or in all of those economic changes put together, which form the great panacea of so many of our statesmen. Without the prudence, and the virtue, and the intelligence of our common people, we shall only have a bulkier, but withal as wretched and distempered a community as ever; and we repeat, that a thorough education, in both the common and Christian sense of the term, forms the only solid basis on which either the political or economic well-being of the nation can be laid."† The onus of the moral change is thus thrown on the common people, as if they could, without possession of the means, accomplish their deliverance from destitution and ignorance.* The Great Alfred laid the beneficent plan of a thorough education, both common and Christian, for his humble countrymen; and it would be well to investigate what were the causes, why, during a thousand years, no system of national education had been established. The disturbing forces of spiritual domination under worldly priests, and of aristocratic rule over the people, will be found to have retained the mass of the inhabitants of this nation in ignorance and

* He must lay an appeal to bishops and their subordinates, to legislators and landowners, touching funds which in right belong to the poor for their moral and religious education, and touching laws which oppress them in their circumstances; and he must appeal to the sense of justice in master-manufacturers regarding rates of wages, and urge on their conscience not to squeeze them on every slight occasion of depression of trade.

† Page 240.

degradation. To begin with, let Dr. Chalmers apply for the restoration to the people, of the funds of Eton, and other educational institutions, turned from their original designs, to pamper the intellectual tastes of the affluent and powerful.

In these, and similar perversions of property, originally belonging to the people, are to be found the strongholds of those opinions and motives for refusing to the people the elective franchise.

The economics of Dr. Chalmers, may be called the "economics of limitations." His work treats of the increase and "Limit" of food—of employment—of capital—of population—of foreign trade—and on the possibility of over-production, or, of a general glut—on taxation—on tithes—and on emigration.

With all due deference to the opinions of such a celebrated writer, we may be permitted to remark, that he alarms himself by the pictures drawn by his own powerful pen. There must, of a necessity, be limits to everything that can be produced on a globe of matter only eight thousand miles in diameter, and which is apt to be affected in its course by a comet or other planetary body. It is true, that, in a given space, a certain number of human beings only can be placed with comfort to themselves, and a certain number of cattle maintained;—it is also true, that a mountainous country, containing much poor land, will not support a population equal to what rich and well-watered plains can maintain. But human indolence is so great, that it is generally the pressure of evil, rather than the hope or desire of good, that stimulates people to active exertions. Now, in this country, there is such an enormous amount of poverty, distress, and ignorance accumulated, as to excite every one to endeavour to get quit of them.

gorge themselves actually to the throat, when good luck puts much food within their reach.

The Fuegians live chiefly on shell-fish; and if they miss the ebb-tide, they must go without their food till the rocks again become exposed; their condition is on a par with the wild animals that share the same kind of food with them. "A woman who was suckling a recently-born child, came one day alongside the vessel, and remained there while the sleet fell and thawed on her naked bosom, and on the skin of her naked child.... These poor wretches were stunted in their growth, their hideous forms bedaubed with white paint, their skins filthy and greasy, their hair entangled, their voices discordant, their gestures violent and without dignity.... At night, five or six human beings, naked and scarcely protected from the wind and rain of their tempestuous climate, sleep on the wet ground, coiled up like animals." *

Our fellow-subjects, the Australian savages, have a character peculiar to themselves. Nature, in their country, has been extremely niggard of the elements of subsistence. The scarcity of food, and the incessant exertions to procure the scanty supply, force on the Australian natives features which distinguish them from all others. There is a sacredness about their food—and connected with it are many curious customs: certain kinds of food are prohibited to the young of both sexes; young men are not allowed to eat the flesh of the higher game till they have gained strength to kill it for themselves. This is but reasonable, as the restriction serves as a training to them, to acquire, as soon as possible, the dexterity in the use of the spear, on which their very existence must depend. But, as soon

* Darwin's Narrative of the Surveying Voyages of the Adventure and Beagle, 1826-36.

as the young savage has arrived at his strength, and learned the use of his arms, he, in the lusty stealth of nature, seizes a female from a hostile tribe, and makes her his wife, and his slave. By mutual aid, two human beings, in a case of great extremity, may contrive to exist; but if they act separately, are sure to perish. The prohibition of certain kinds of food is rigorously observed among the savages of Australia, and serves the same purpose as the law among civilized men, of fixing an age for coming into the possession of an estate.

There is truly a mystery in the existence of a great portion of the human race in a state which, physically, places them nearly on a level with the beasts which surround them. The first impression made on the reflective mind is one of terror; for it seems as if the Deity were malignant, in abandoning his creatures to the withering sterility of nature, or indifferent to their fate by leaving them to be cruelly starved by their fellow-men.

It is melancholy and humiliating to think, that, within the limits of the British islands there are portions of the population physically as shockingly destitute as the Fuegian or the Australian natives, while their minds, acutely touched by the degradation of their situation, are irritated by the sight of abundance around them. Here, in the midst of Europe, in a country boasting of its Christian civilization, of its commerce, and its political power, there is a considerable part of the inhabitants in the fearful straits of a state of nature. This state of destitution and misery is not the consequence of sterility of soil, of failure of harvests, of war, or pestilence, but it is the result of a defect in the laws of the country.

In certain of our large cities there is an artificial famine, which presses on a great part of their inhabitants with a

down of the strongholds of tyranny. "Men in mighty power were thirty-four years endeavouring to destroy him;"* but in spite of these endeavours, and by the exercise of a manly spirit, he gained admittance into the legislature, and never ceased to advocate the cause of the people. His writings have fixed the standard of the English language; and in his pages many of the public characters of his time will acquire an unenviable fame: for certain it is, that his writings will survive and be searched, long after the memory of men famous in their day has perished from history.

In the study of character, there is nothing so striking as the contrast in the opinions on certain subjects entertained by celebrated writers. Between William Cobbett and Doctor Chalmers there is a wonderful difference. The Professor of Divinity designates the law which guarantees to the old, infirm, and indigent, a protection from the inclemency of the seasons, and a provision against hunger, as the "*ACCURSED law of pauperism*;" and, while he would deny to the poor any legal claim on the fruits of the earth, under any circumstances except disease or accident, he would maintain the law of primogeniture in its fullest extent, even though estates should accumulate in one hand to the amount of half the kingdom; and this to maintain "a splendid Aristocracy, and a gradation of ranks shelving down to the basement of society." On the subject of Aristocracy, there is something rather remarkable in the enthusiasm of the reverend and learned Doctor, who appears to have drawn his inspiration from the Chronicles of Froissart, rather than from those of Moses. "He thinks of our own political fabric, that it not only affords a vastly greater number of noble and graceful spectacles, in the minarets and the blazing pinnacles which crowd its ele-

* His Letter to Peel.

vation ; but that, abstracting from the degradation which has been caused by its accursed law of pauperism, it would have had a more elevated basement in its well-conditioned peasantry, than any other country or kingdom of the civilized world. It is not for the sake of its ornaments and chivalry alone—it is not for the sake of these chiefly, that we want the high rank and fortune of our Aristocracy to be upholden. It is because we think there is a soul in chivalry, which, though nursed in the bosom of affluence, does not cloister there, but passes abroad, from mind to mind, and lights up a certain glow of inspiration throughout the mass of a community.”* It is long since it was said that “the age of chivalry was gone”—and in the history of this country, there is nothing less noble or chivalrous than the proceedings of the Aristocracy in matters of taxation. One of the strongest objections made by Dr. Chalmers to the legal claim by poor people for maintenance, is the bluntness of feeling thereby created towards relatives, and the indifference of children to their aged parents. But this assertion may be well doubted, as it is contrary to the character of the English common people.

There is, however, no doubt of the fact, that two hundred and thirty-three members of the House of Commons, men of high rank and great pretensions, representing the aristocratic class, refused, so late as the year 1837, to give assent to the natural sentiment, “that when close relationship exists, and where means of support may be afforded, it is to family connections, and not to the public purse, that application for relief should be made.”†

It is perfectly manifest, that there is in the mind of

* Chalmers' Political Economy ; chapter on the Law of Primogeniture, page 369.

† Report of the Committee of the House of Commons on Pensions.

or partial abandonment. If a commercial city or depôt be taken and pillaged by a fierce enemy, then the matter is very different—but in war, the country, with its fields, suffers as much as the towns. It is melancholy to ramble through a ruined city, once the seat of a great population, engaged in the active excitement of commerce,—but a deeper melancholy sinks on the soul of the traveller, who traverses a country of fertile plains and valleys made desolate by revolutions, and the remnant of the population degraded into miserable serfs. Such observations ought to occur to the mind, on considering the present state of the British empire, and they will help to remove the apprehension of the transfer from this country of a great commerce. Tyre, and the other ancient commercial states, fell to destruction, either under the judgment of heaven, or in consequence of the establishment of markets more favourably situated. The Crusades, by pouring a deep stream of men and wealth from the north to the south, enriched Venice and Genoa—and for several ages the commerce of the world was divided between those rival states.

But the geographical situation of the British islands will command for them a full share of the commercial intercourse with the universal globe, as long as mankind continue to have habits and tastes similar to those possessed by the generations that have gone before. It is not a mere figure of speech to say, that London is the centre of the world, but it is literally and geographically true. But not to be too precise in an admeasurement of this kind: take the centre of England as the point whence to draw the lines, and it will be found that eastward to Kamtschatka, and westward to Behring's Straits, the distances are about equal; from the same centre, the lines drawn to Pekin and to Lima—to Canton and Mexico—to Cal-

cutta and New Orleans—to Cabul and New York—to Bombay and Washington—to the Cape of Good Hope and Buenos Ayres—to Alexandria and Moscow,—are respectively about the same lengths. Hindostan and the West India Islands are about equidistant. So are Ceylon and Panama—Sumatra and California—the Caspian Sea and Newfoundland—Spitzbergen and Hudson's Bay. And taking the greatest rivers of the world, we shall find that the mouths of the Mississippi and the Ganges—of the St. Lawrence and the Niger—of the Amazon and the Indus, are, respectively, about equidistant from Great Britain. The distances are not the sailing ones, but are taken roughly from lines drawn across the map or chart of the globe.

It will be new to many persons to know, that we are living on an island situated nearly in the middle of the habitable earth. Now, we may be well satisfied with this great natural advantage which Providence has given to us, without aiming and striving at what is called the mastery of the seas, or the command of the commerce of the world.* There is no use of heroics in the plain hard business of commerce and navigation. What we have to do is, to free ourselves from the withering grasp of partial lawgivers,

* It would diminish, and perhaps remove, that jealousy entertained by foreigners, of what is called the maritime preponderance of Great Britain, were they to reflect that our sea-going habits are not so much matters of choice, as of necessity. We cannot leave the limits of our country without going on ship-board; hence the number of our vessels in the narrow seas, and in all parts of the ocean—hence, also, the necessity of our having colonies. Would the good people of France and other countries have us to remain for ever within our boundaries? Our fleets, commercial and military, are necessary for our very existence; and we will not meddle with any power, if we are not meddled with. The great standing-armies of France, Russia, and Prussia, cannot be justified with equal reason.

in question." "They at length have not only to pay in advanced prices and the additional expenses of husbandry together, the full amount of the taxes; but in virtue of the straitened cultivation which has taken place in consequence of them, they have to meet the charge with a proportionally less income than they would otherwise have had." If his views were necessary to remove the evils of 1832, how much more applicable are they to the accumulated distresses of another decade, when the country appears to stand on the verge of a crisis.

His views are brought in support of the argument carried throughout this work—namely, that the taxation on the necessary food, and other articles required by the people, is at the root of all the distresses and destitution of the masses of this population; and it ought at once to be removed, and the amount laid on land, and on the transfer of real property. The practical cures for the distresses of the country, are, the total repeal of the corn-laws, and of the laws taxing live or dead animals to serve for food to the inhabitants—the total repeal of the duties on malt and hops—the reduction to a mere statistical duty on sugar, coffee, tea, rice, wheaten-flour, fruits; and the transfer of the amount raised from these articles to a charge on real estates passing into the hands of heirs at law, and to a tax on the net rents of lands. But, in taxing the revenues from real property, a graduated rate is recommended by the reverend Doctor who maintains "that the proprietor of ten thousand a year, could not only part with a larger sum annually, but a larger proportional sum, than the proprietor of a thousand a year."* Indeed, in his estimation this is one of the great advantages of the law of primogeniture, BY PRESENTING LARGE PROPERTIES IN FEW HANDS AS SUBJECTS FOR TAX-

* Page 362.

ATION. He says of popular topics, "The loudest against the burden of taxation, are the loudest against the law of primogeniture." There can be no wonder at that, when it is considered that it is by the law of primogeniture that the burden falls light on the law-makers, and crushes with its weight the mass of the population. The law of primogeniture is the grand disturbing force to which this country is exposed.

The whole scope of his two chapters on the "Effects of Taxes" is in favour of a complete commutation of taxes as they exist, to a general tax on the net income of landlords, who would still have the possession of as zealous an interest as heretofore in the improvement of their property, even subject to a tax of fifty per cent on the net revenue.* So much was he impressed with the importance and the advantage of a tax on private revenue from property, that he recommended in 1832 an immediate trial, or beginning, of a plan of commutation from taxes on commodities.

The financial policy of the present government of 1842, is exactly copied from the suggestions made by Doctor Chalmers ten years before; and the very arguments used by the Doctor were borrowed in the discussions in parliament.† So earnest was he in this matter, that rather than not make a beginning, he would be at first satisfied with so small an amount as one or two per cent, "that all pretext for discontent on the part of the labouring classes might be done away."‡ But he claimed no merit for "boldness" of conception in proposing such a moderate rate on the net rent of

* Page 249.

† The Premier got some credit for "*boldness*" in his plans by the organs of his party. There was a good deal of "*assurance*" in the plans, in the act of appropriating them from the real author, without any acknowledgment by the person who made use of them.

‡ Note at page 304.

sweetness in the food to which exertion has given an appetite.*

A government stands towards a people in the relation of a parent to his family, and if it neglect to provide the means of subsistence, or put obstacles in the way of the people procuring their food, that government takes upon itself a fearful responsibility.

According to the law of God and nature, no class or order of men, forming a government, have a right to tax the food of the rest of the citizens, in order to save their own property from taxation.

The proportion of the fruits of the earth demanded by Moses was a land or property tax, and nothing else; or it may be called the rent of the soil, paid to God as the proprietor. It formed the total burden of taxation, for the support of the worship of God, and for the general expenses of the government of the country.

Such is the stupifying effect of the avaricious disposition on legislators, that the laws of many countries excite, among impartial investigators, contempt for their authors. But the varied expressions, which the smiles of pity and derision give to the beholder, is soon overcast by the gloom which the fiendish spirit of those laws throws around.

The aristocratic sect of political economists, to whom reference has been made, turn round to millions of the

* In unison with the songs and warblings of birds, one of the most pleasing sounds in nature is the whistle of the ploughboy, heard in the calm of a summer's morning, thrilling over the field. Even in the neighbourhood of a crowded city, the stonemason, the carpenter, and other mechanics, will be heard singing, and with healthy faces proceeding to their daily labour. There is a compensating principle in nature. What contortions does the face of the philosopher present, when some circumstance forces a smile! Who ever heard a statesman whistle? Peel would fall into convulsions, were he to attempt to whistle any air more joyous than "*Begone, dull Care!*"

human race, and tell them that that there is no room for them at nature's feast ! But how can they thus impeach the wisdom and beneficence of the Author of nature, with their knowledge of the provision-laws made by dominant parties among the Spaniards, the Dutch, and the English !

The laws made by the aristocratic government of Spain decreed that the olive and the vine should be rooted out and destroyed from the soil of Mexico, and prohibited the cultivation there of every article that might interfere with the consumption of the productions of Spain.*

The colonial regulations established by the monopolizing government of Holland, condemned to destruction all the produce of their Spice Islands, that exceeded the limited quantities assigned for the markets of Europe, held under monopoly. The Dutch Spice Islands have been appropriately called the gardens of the earth, and nature is there most exuberant in her productions ; but man interposes his laws, and casts a blight on what he touches.

The sugar laws made by the colonial power in England are in principle precisely similar to the Spanish and Dutch decrees, for they are established to uphold a necessary article of consumption at an extravagant price, in order

To speak candidly, Spain has a long catalogue of national crimes registered against her, and to the philosophic investigator they stand out in colours which reflect on that country a deep shade. Among her other atrocities, she is indirectly responsible for the system of *Buccaneering*, established in the West India seas early in the seventeenth century. Many of the islands in those seas, which she did not consider worthy of her occupation, were settled by colonists from England, France, and Holland ; and in a spirit of spite she proceeded to harass and destroy those colonies. These measures of rigour rendered the settlers desperate, and, under the name of *Buccaneers*, they commenced a savage retaliation against the Spaniards and their settlements, and ultimately against the natives of other countries. In fine, an atrocious system of piracy sprang out of the retaliation inflicted on the Spaniards for their original wanton cruelties on innocent persons.

look at futurity with calmness and resolution, and be prepared for great changes. The middle classes of this country will require to put forth their well-established energies, and on the electoral portion of this class depends the safety of the empire. They cannot now halt between two opinions, and they must decide between being made the victims of a social convulsion, or the saviours of their country, by instituting a system of retributive taxation. The question is one merely of time. It is assumed, that the vast accumulation of wealth in the hands of the privileged legislative class, has been made from the partial and severe taxation of the people; and it is proved incontestably, that this heavy and unjust load of taxation presses down in misery the body of the industrious citizens. Therefore, as partial taxation has caused the distress and decadence of the nation—retributive taxation is the only safe and constitutional course to be pursued, for the deliverance from the misery which exists and the danger which threatens.

The statistical statements and facts, adduced in support of the position taken in this branch of the subject, are arranged without strict regard to their connection with each other; but they must stand for themselves, and the inferences and reasonings therefrom be judged accordingly.

A comprehensive view will be first given of the state of the property in Great Britain and Ireland, taken at three different periods, by three writers on the statistical condition of the British empire. These estimates of the resources of this country were severally made by Mr. Colquhoun in 1812—Mr. Lowe in 1822—and Mr. Macqueen in 1832.

In 1812 Mr. Colquhoun estimated, as under, the property in the empire, taken in round numbers :—

Cultivated lands, gardens, and orchards	-	£1,200,000,000	
Tithes belonging to the Laity	-	80,000,000	
Mines and minerals	-	75,000,000	
Canals, tolls, timber	-	50,000,000	
Dwelling-houses, not included in the rent of land.			
Warehouses	-	400,000,000	
Manufactured goods in warehouses and shops	-	140,000,000	
Foreign merchandise in ditto ditto	-	40,000,000	
British shipping	-	27,000,000	
Animals, horses, cattle, sheep, hogs	-	183,000,000	
Agricultural property of all kinds	-	45,000,000	
Fisheries	-	10,000,000	
<i>Unproductive property :</i>	-		
Waste lands	-	£132,000,000	
Household Furniture	-	185,000,000	
Wearing apparel	-	20,000,000	
Plate, jewelry	-	44,000,000	
Specie, dollars	-	15,000,000	
			396,000,000
<i>Public property—</i>			£2,646,000,000
Buildings, churches, bridges	-	£27,000,000	
Arsenals, castles, &c.	-	17,000,000	
Dock-yards	-	10,000,000	
Ships of war	-	25,000,000	
Ordnance	-	10,000,000	
			89,000,000
<i>Colonial dependencies—</i>			£2,735,000,000
In Europe	-	£22,100,000	
In North America	-	46,500,000	
In West Indies	-	100,000,000	
In Conquered Colonies	-	75,000,000	
In Africa	-	4,770,000	
In Asia	-	38,700,000	
			287,070,000
			£3,022,070,000
<i>India under the East India Company</i>	-	-	1,072,400,000
			£4,094,470,000
1812.			
Property annually created in Great Britain and Ireland :—			
Agricultural.—Grain	-	£73,731,000	
Hay, grass	-	89,200,000	
Turnips, potatoes	-	29,000,000	
Gardens, orchards	-	2,850,000	
Butter, cheese	-	5,000,000	
Timber	-	2,000,000	
Wool	-	5,159,000	
Hemp	-	4,500,000	
Hops	-	1,300,000	
		£212,740,000	
All other things	-	4,000,000	
			£216,740,000

Mr. Macqueen estimates the amount of wages annually paid to

Agricultural and mining labourers, at .	£161,000,000
Manufacturing and maritime labourers .	155,000,000
Artisans and all other mechanics . . .	59,000,000
Domestic servants	35,000,000
	<hr/>
	£410,000,000

Mr. Colquhoun divides the annual income of the nation into £292,000,000 from the productive classes, and £137,000,000 from all other classes.

From these statements, let us proceed to deduce the fiscal and political consequences to the vast bulk of the inhabitants of this country. With respect to the political bearings of the question, we have the majority of numbers in receipt of four-sevenths of the annual income of the nation, absolutely helpless and prostrate under the feet of the dominant party in the country. Their property, their liberties, and their very existence, lie at the mercy of laws made by a small section of the inhabitants; and here is a fearful illustration of the fact of the political power of an Aristocracy, being founded on the direct control of the subsistence of many millions of active and intelligent men.

It rests with the electoral body in this country to remove this monstrous evil, and to restore to every man in Great Britain and Ireland, the right of giving a simple vote to send a man to the legislature, to protect himself, his wife, and his children, from the effect of partial laws! Can the most timid mind really perceive any danger in imparting such a right? There is none. By imparting this right, it is doing only an act founded on the eternal principles of justice.*

* The greater the number of persons interested in any establishment, or joint-stock company, the more solid is its foundation, and consequently

But fiscal extortion and political power are so connected together, that it is impossible to separate them. We shall find this in every law passed by the British legislature. What a scope for insidious spoliation is presented by the immense amount of circulating wealth within the British dominion ! The analysis of the system of taxation established in this country, unfolds the principle of evil in every part of it. An amount equal to half the national debt, annually circulates, or ought to circulate, as wages of labourers, who are made the prey of every party in the country ; and the taxes on their consumption reach them, charged with interest of money, and expenses, which in effect nearly double the rate, or, in another way of explaining it, reduce their wages to the limit of starvation. A reduction of the comparatively trifling sum of one shilling a week in the wages of labourers in this country, would amount at the end of the year to about fifteen millions of pounds sterling.

the greater security does it offer to the public. Will any person please to take the trouble to explain why the same result should not follow from an increased number of citizens having an indirect interest in the government of the country through representatives chosen by these citizens ? An appeal is made to the good sense of the Scotch electors on this subject, which is illustrated by the admirable system of joint-stock banking established in Scotland, held forth as a model for other countries.

In the *Times* money-article of 15th Nov. 1842, there is this quotation from the bankers' circular, " We are firmly of opinion that Scotland is suffering much less at this trying juncture than England, and that because the banks protect and identify themselves more with the people than the English banks."

The national debt itself confirms this statement. In 1834 there were 189,312 proprietors, of whom the large number of 173,324 were claimants on the country for less than one hundred pounds a year each.

When the toll on Waterloo Bridge was lowered for foot-passengers, from one penny to a halfpenny, there were 2,086,296 more persons passed in the year ; and the revenue was only about 7 per cent less, after the rate had been reduced 50 per cent.

The present embarrassments of the Treasury demonstrate, in the clearest and most melancholy way, the hollow nature of the fiscal system established in this country. The prophetic economic maxims of Adam Smith have been despised for two generations, until at the beginning of the third generation, young and old are convinced that "taxes on the necessities of life are a curse equal to the barrenness of the earth and the inclemency of the heavens." How short-sighted is cupidity; and how heavy is the sensibility of landowning legislators !

The danger of resting the revenue of a great empire on taxes on consumption, and of hazarding its safety by a failure of supplies, never struck the imagination of the authors of the scheme. Danger now stares them in the face, and they know not where to turn on discovering that

consumption is checked by some malign influence at work ; in 1840, the consumption was 950 tons—1841, 860 tons—1842, 880 tons. The quantities of coffee, chicory, and cocoa, are extracted from the circular of Messrs Trueman and Cook, the extensive brokers, but the deductions and remarks are the author's.

In the article of sugar—the rich man enjoys the pure produce of the cane—the poor man must swallow a compound of sweetened trash ; the rich man smokes a genuine Havana cigar, brought fresh to him from the original package—the hard-toiled man must try to lull his nerves with cabbage-leaves steeped in tobacco-juice ; the legislator sips the finest-flavoured tea—the poor must complain of their hardships, and lament their injustice, over a cup of the decoction of sloe-leaves !

But the heart sickens over this subject, and searches in vain for the humanity and equity of British law of fiscal arrangement. It cannot be believed, that the results of such a system were foreseen by the framers of it—and it is believed, that a very small number of persons understand the real bearing of fiscal laws on the condition and happiness of a people. The humanity of our law-makers can only be saved at the expense of all those qualities of intelligence, information, judgment, and foresight, which a person may look for in the men who legislate for a great manufacturing and commercial nation.

there is a limit to the powers of consumption. Distress of the mass of the population causes this diminution of revenue; and this carries to the mind many melancholy reflections.

But independently of this involuntary diminution of consumption, other circumstances may combine, and do combine, to increase the difficulty of raising supplies. A change of taste—fashion—the operation of foreign tariffs—may cause a falling-off in the use of certain articles, on which taxes of custom or excise were formerly levied to a large amount. The keen eyes of fiscal calculators have discovered, that part of the deficiency of the revenue, down to the end of 1842, arose from a cessation of the introduction of port wine. But people can live without port wine; and what a miserable condition this country must be in, if it become dependent for its public revenue on the decrees of the wine-growing legislators of Portugal!

One most important cause of the decrease of the taxes on articles of consumption, is to be found in the spread of temperance among vast multitudes who formerly were slaves to whisky and gin. The cause of temperance among the bulk of the industrious and labouring classes, is of incalculable importance. Its consequences are physical, moral, and political. The physical effects are manifest, in the exchange of an intoxicating and deleterious drink for wholesome bread and other food—in improved health, and increased strength—in better clothing, and greater domestic comfort. The moral effects on the individual directly flow from the improvement in his circumstances; he has acquired *some* property by the change—he can educate his children, and can procure books for their instruction.*

* As if to impress on the minds of Governments the importance of cheap food to a people, an index is afforded by a law of nature, showing the rela-

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course of the year.

And an increase in the price of corn caused by the corn-laws, added a farther sum to be paid by the consumers, of about eleven million sterling.* As the poor of the land have to purchase their small supplies, from day to day, of dealers, who perhaps are the third or sixth remove from the original importers or merchants, the consequence is, that prices are artificially augmented by this process to a large amount. In round numbers, it was computed by the committee of the House of Commons on import duties, that about fifty millions were added to the price of food alone by the indirect operation of prohibitive laws.

These laws may be abrogated, but is the fund which they have added to the property of the makers of these laws, to remain untouched by the tax-gatherer?

Without being particular in the selection, a few cases, as they come to hand, will be here given, to show the effect of the present system of taxation on the living of the labouring man.

About twenty years ago, a labourer with his family spent on food alone about seven-tenths of his annual wages. In proportion as the income of families increased, the proportion paid for food became less: a family with an income of £250 a year, spent in provisions about £105—a good deal

* See Report on Import Duties 1840.

less than a half: a family with £500 spent in provisions about £165;* being about a third of the amount; and so on up to the landowner with his £100,000 a year. Taxes on food are absolutely not felt by a man whose provision-carts bring daily from his estates most articles of necessary consumption.

In 1792, the wages of an agricultural labourer at nine shillings a week purchased $10\frac{1}{4}$ gallons of flour. In 1841 the wages, supposing that the labourer got the same as in 1792, only procured 8 gallons of flour.* In these two simple facts is condensed the history of a nation's decline!

In September 1841 a petition was presented by William Blackstone of Birmingham, to the House of Commons, affirming that a quantity of bread, the cost of which was 14s. 6d., might be obtained for 5s. 11d. (a difference of 8s. 7d.) if there were no taxes on corn, no tithes, or other imposts on food.

In November 1841, it was proved in a debate in the House of Commons, that a poor washerwoman, out of 1s. $7\frac{1}{2}$ d. paid for groceries, had actually to pay indirectly $8\frac{1}{2}$ d. in taxes. A man who spent 16s. 6d. in groceries, paid 3s. 9d. as government-duty only. So that the washerwoman only got $6\frac{1}{2}$ d. for her 1s. and the rich man got $9\frac{1}{2}$ d. for his 1s.

A family with a weekly expenditure of £5 3s. 0d. has to pay in government taxes 11s. 11d.

Landlord's taxes - 24s. 2d.

West India planter's taxes 3s. 0d.—1 19 1

£3 3 11

* See Lowe's *State of England*, 1822, page 277 and [100.]

† London *Globe*, 2d November 1841.

Mr. Hearn concludes his observations by estimating the amount extorted from the labouring classes within the last twenty-five years. He takes 4,000,000 of families, at an average of 9s. 6d. a week, equal to £24 a year; out of which he calculates £8, or one-third, to go in indirect taxes to landowners and other monopolists.

4,000,000 families, at £24 £96,000,000

One-third is 32,000,000

At twenty-five years, during which the corn-laws have existed, the amount will be £800,000,000; this gives the sum of £200 extracted from labour of each family, toiling for twenty-five years to enrich an aristocratic body. Surely such statements as these will open the eyes of the middle and working classes to the gulf of ruin into which they are

No. 12.

Nine 4lb. loaves at 8½d.	6 4½d.	for the bread	4s. 1½d.	for the tax	2s. 3d.
20lbs. meat at 9½d.	15 10	"	meat 9 2	"	6 8
4lbs. butter at 1s. 2d.	4 8	"	butter 3 8	"	1 0
3lbs. cheese at 10d.	2 6	"	cheese 2 0	"	0 6
1 lb. tea at 5s. 6d.	5 6	"	tea 3 3½	"	2 2½
1 lb. moist sugar at 7d.	0 7	"	sugar 0 1½	"	0 5½
3lbs. loaf do. at 10d.	2 6	"	do. 1 1½	"	1 4½
14 pots beer at 4d.	4 8	"	beer 3 6	"	1 2

£2 2 7½ £1 7 0½ £0 15 7½

Weekly Expenditure £2 2 7½

Cost of food £1 7 0½

Direct and indirect taxes 0 15 7½—£2 2 7½

Yearly expenditure on food . . £110 16 6

This family consisted of seven persons.

Mr. Hearn published his tables in the summer of 1841. The prices given are those of that year. He says—"In conclusion, I beg to repeat, that these tables are not founded on supposition, but are an exhibition of the actual consumption and expenditure of the several families, all of which are known to the writer."

	Brought forward	312	0	6
The window duties are levied on other classes ; but				
the taxes on a house with 180 windows are		46	11	3

Total assessed taxes	358	11	9
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The house duty was so shamefully evaded by the possessors of princely mansions, through means of low valuation of rental, that it was given up.* In summing up the burdens of the possessor of £100,000 a year, we have

Land tax	-	-	-	£1,500	0	0
Taxes on consumption	-	-	-	1,000	0	0
Direct taxes on articles of luxury and splendour	-	-	-	358	11	7
Total amount on £100,000 a year, equal to						
£2 16s. per cent	-	-	-	2,858	11	7

The income tax of 1842, of £2 18s. 4d. per cent. is charged at the same rate on the industrious man, who, perhaps, without twenty pounds of property, gains his income of £151 by anxiety of mind, and labour of hands.

The foregoing statement will exhibit the balance of taxation between the hardworking man at £28 a year, and the noble duke at £100,000—namely, the difference between £3 per cent and 50 per cent. Such as it is, let the landowner have credit for the £2,858 11s. 7d. as his annual contribution to the support of the government established, be it observed, chiefly for the protection of property. But there is another view to be taken of the subject.

It has been demonstrated beyond a doubt, and is even

* “ A fact has come to our knowledge, which is so monstrous, that it will scarcely be credited, but for the truth of which we can nevertheless vouch ; namely, that whilst the houses of persons in business in Bury, are assessed upon the rack-rent value of forty, fifty, sixty, and up to one hundred pounds a year, Rushbrooke Hall, the fine old Elizabethan mansion of the county member, is assessed at twenty pounds !—Extracted from the *Bury Post* newspaper, into the *Morning Chronicle* of the 4th of Feb. 1843. ”

from in favour of an aristocratic body, as the crowning pinnacle on the heads of the labouring millions at eleven shillings a week.*

But, as respects the substantial comfort and happiness of the classes within reach of the expenditure, when issued by a hundred families instead of one, the following statement will illustrate the case. A hundred families at £1,000 a year each, will not afford the spectacle of one carriage with four horses—two postilions—an outrider—two footmen and two ladies'-maids on the outside—ready to obey the commands of an elegant family within: but they will present a hundred quiet homes, containing several hundred individuals in comfortable circumstances. In

* I find that the supposed case in the text is nearly one of reality for Lord Stanley, the present Secretary for the Colonies, is reported to have spoken to his constituents in 1841—"That it was necessary to keep up prices and rents, for the sake of the farmers, the landlords, but, above all, the humbler classes, who would be the first, and greatest sufferers, if the gentlemen of England were compelled to reduce their establishments, to curtail their pleasure-grounds, to limit the number of their gardeners, or to turn off one or two grooms which the corn-laws enabled them to keep." . "It is for the labouring classes of this country to consider, whether that which diminishes the income of the landlord, and the profit of the farmer, is likely to be productive of advantage to society or to them."—*From Mr. Ward's Speech in the House of Commons, 14th March, 1843.*

It is evident from this strain of argument, that my Lord Stanley is either very deficient of the knowledge of common arithmetical analysis, or that he entertained a contempt for the understanding of the people whom he addressed; and as the speech of a Secretary of State at a public meeting is recorded as historical evidence, the insult to his audience was extended to the country at large. It is the business and duty of a man to make the most of the case he takes up; and in reference to this subject, I may refer to the *Globe* newspaper, of the 7th September, 1842, for the information that Earl Derby, the father of Lord Stanley, discharged from his joint establishment twenty-five servants, to enable him to meet the income tax. This fact can easily be verified, and it will help to illustrate the speech of Lord Stanley, quoted above.

place of fifty servants crowded in one spot, they will have three hundred domestics, (three to a family, on an average), under the direct inspection of their masters and mistresses, and deriving benefit from the example of regular domestic society. And in fine weather, perhaps, a hundred snug one-horse chaises will go out on an afternoon's drive, affording health and enjoyment to family groups of children, delighted with everything they see.

This argument in favour of large incomes giving employment to many servants and tradespeople, is therefore completely done away with, for we find, that for fifty menials in the establishment of one very wealthy family, we have three hundred servants, domiciled in a hundred families, enjoying the blessings of a sufficiency. By subdividing the £100,000 into 200 parts at £500 each, we shall have 200 families, with two servants each—thus giving employment to eight times the number employed by one family. In carrying on this sort of calculation, we shall find, in every branch, the same gain or advantage to the community by a subdivision of property.

One of the most dangerous tendencies of the modern school of economists, is, that of throwing large masses into few hands—depopulating whole districts of a country, in order to throw many farms into one—granting in colonies immense tracts of waste-lands to companies or individuals, and, by economic laws, bringing together into the possession of a few hundred persons, the wealth that ought to be spread among millions. The utmost liberty ought to be given to individuals, to accumulate whatever amount of property they are enabled to do, within their lifetime. But society has claims which are superior to the wishes and intentions of the dead.

a year spent in provisions, will measure a gross income of about £1,000—so that the £50 to £60 of tax to the landed interest, amount to 5 to 6 per cent on that sum. As the income diminishes, the ratio of the taxation increases.

It has been shown that a man with £500 a year, spends in provisions £166; a man with £250, spends £105; so that the first contributes $6\frac{1}{2}$ to 8 per cent., and the second contributes $8\frac{1}{2}$ to $10\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, to enable my Lord Dashly to speculate in horses, run his carriages, sport with his ladies, hire his French cooks or Swiss valets, and to pay the interest on money borrowed of usurers, assurance companies, and other wealthy parties, or to indulge the rural tastes of Lord Landly, gracefully exhibited in the extension of his "pleasure grounds," in the addition to his gardeners, or in the increase of his grooms.

Now, there is a very steady-going, respectable portion of the middle classes, for whom a great degree of sympathy is always excited, and for whose special benefit it is professed, in and out of the legislature, that these most interesting and romantic corn-laws were first enacted, and are still maintained. Now, Dear Farmers, we have become quite affectionate towards you, and sincerely wish you health, prosperity, and happiness. As a proof, that you are well taken care of, you pay your income tax charged according to the amount of the rent that you give for your farms; and all of you, whose rents are under £300 a year, are exempted from that most obnoxious impost. By returning on your rents, you are saved the annoyance of exposing your private affairs. We are no farmers, and must confess our ignorance of agricultural matters, but we know that you are *consumers* like the rest of your countrymen, and it is to your character as consumers that we are applying these remarks. In all those discussions on provision-

laws, rents of land, and so forth, your position as citizens, living at rates from £250 to £500 and £1,000 a year, has been, as far as we have noticed, almost entirely overlooked. We presume that a farmer occupying a farm at the rent of £300 a year may be considered as worth, or living at, that rate, and consequently, according to the foregoing computation, he contributes to the *landlord* interest, not the *landed* interest, £25 to £30 a year, in the increased prices of the provisions for his own family. In another part of this work it has been demonstrated that, in consequence of these corn-laws, he pays 8s. 8d. an acre more than he would do, were these laws abolished; and on a farm of 200 acres, this will amount to £86 a year. The farmer knows best whether he gets, one year with another, an advance in the price of his corn, to replace the extra rent to his landlord—but, at all events, he recovers nothing to make good the tax on his own consumption, and on the consumption of corn and forage for his horses and cattle! Oh, these corn-laws! the most spiteful delusion that ever was practised on man and beast!

Lord Stanley, who, as a secretary to the government, ought to know what he is about, said at a public meeting, “that it was necessary to keep up prices and rents, for the sake of the farmers, the landlords, but above all, the humbler classes, who would be the first, and the greatest sufferers, if the gentlemen of England,”—and so on.*

* The attention of the author of this work was first decidedly engaged in the consideration of our fiscal arrangements, during the study of our colonial system in the Australian colonies. He early detected the operation of the needy or insolvent part of the aristocratic order, in the schemes of colonization; and, in a letter that he addressed to Sir Robert Peel on these subjects, under date of May 1, 1841, he thus expressed himself, “There are two classes of persons in this country, who favour the idea, that our distresses arise from a positive excess of numbers. The first is,

to repay the amount thus expended. The creditors of Lord William Huntingtower, will thus have a claim on Lord William Paget, for the aforesaid amount of three thousand five hundred pounds, expended in the independent borough of Andover, in the county of Hampshire, England.

Now, we will not believe that, ill-informed, reckless, and ill-advised, as Mr. Tollemache was, he had any desire or design of securing his person from arrest for debt, by trying to get within the protecting privileges of the House of Commons. We are not sure if this exemption from arrest for debt still exists as one of the privileges of parliament, but, if it does yet exist, not a moment ought to be lost in removing this disgrace from the legislature.

We believe that the following is one of the rules established in all the London West-End Clubs : “ If any member shall have the misfortune to become bankrupt, or take the benefit of any Act of Parliament for relief of Insolvent Debtors, or make any assignment for the benefit of, or compound with, his creditors, he shall, *ipso facto*, cease to be a member of the club, and shall forfeit all right to or claim upon the club or its property, and shall not be again admissible as a member until the expiration of twelve calendar months from the happening of any of the before-mentioned events : after which time he shall be re-admissible, by ballot, without payment of the entrance-fee.” As there is scarcely one member of either House of Parliament who does not belong to a club, with a clause or law to the above effect, protective of the property and credit of the club, there appears to be the very essence of satire pointed to the legislative body, by allowing a member of Parliament to retain his seat, while he may be disqualified from appearing in another place, where the most serious business transacted is to read the newspapers, retell or listen to the

gossip of the day, eat a cheap dinner, and infringe the regulations by sleeping on an elegant sofa with dirty boots on.

These observations are addressed to merchants, manufacturers, and bankers, and let them ponder and well consider the consequences of a parliamentary representation so ill-contrived, so loose, and so corrupt, as the system which admits such abuses as the one described. And the reports of Committees of the House of Commons, on the corruption, on the bribery, and the illegal practices brought to light in the election of 1841, have established the existence of a state of things, which ought not to be allowed to continue a year longer. All parties in the House have agreed on the enormity of the corruption, and have confessed guilty to the charge, and all express themselves anxious to remove the disgrace from the country. The way to prove the sincerity of the desire, would be to enact a most restrictive law against bribery at elections of members for Parliament—even to make it felony to offer or accept a bribe for a vote on such occasions. After such a law should be passed, let the present Parliament be dissolved, and an appeal made to the integrity and good sense of the electors for another.

This is no party question.

Our merchants and bankers must weigh the consequences—and consider the injury that their credit, and the credit of the nation, will sustain, on the exchanges of Paris, Amsterdam, and the other great marts of Europe—in the bazaars of Calcutta, or in the factories of Canton—in New York, or New Orleans—or round the globe itself—if it become known to the nations, that a bankrupt boy, without judgment, and not so competent or well-informed as any junior clerk in a broker's office or a chandler's shop, may

barked in a great enterprise.* His motion for a reform of the representation of the people, was made just fifty years before that great change was accomplished. But blindness seized him on the outbreak of the Revolution in France. It is indeed most extraordinary to find such men as Pitt and Burke, whose genius was bright and acute, in a state of perfect infatuation on the subject of that great event. They appeared to have lost entirely the faculty of discerning, or knowing beforehand, the events that were to happen to-morrow from the transactions of the day. Burke considered the French nation, after the decisive outbreak, as verging to ruin, and falling into a state of complete helplessness and imbecility. He considered her expunged from the European system, and in 1790 recommended a reduction in the peace-establishment of this country, because he believed France to be politically extinct, and distant from the restoration to her former active existence. But still more infatuated was Pitt, who, in 1792, declared in parliament, that there was every prospect of a continuation of peace, which he thought might be reckoned on for ten years.

The following year opened with the war that terminated in 1815 !

This ought to be a lesson to statesmen, and make them diffident of their own views of matters affecting the interests of nations ; and it ought to teach a people to be mistrustful of the judgment and foresight of the men who make the greatest pretensions to both.

* A man, who, at the age of two or three and twenty, commanded such attention on his first appearance in the House of Commons, as to lead him to the head of the government in a few years afterwards, with little private fortune or interest, was an extraordinary man.

But there are no greater instances of infatuated blindness in public characters of great name, and of total darkness in their mental vision, than what have occurred within these last fifteen years.

Wellington's celebrated declaration in the legislature, that the popular branch of it could not be improved, and that he would oppose any measure for that purpose, preceded, by about eighteen months, a complete reform of the system of representation of the people. And, ten years later, his announcement that he did not know any country where the poor man had a better chance of improving his condition than in England, was made at a time when the most appalling misery was overspreading the country; and shortly afterwards, on the recommendation of the bench of bishops, the Sovereign of this great empire addressed a letter, begging charity, to save the unhappy people from starvation.*

But a still more alarming instance of that infatuation which seizes the government of a nation in times of imminent danger, was the apathy displayed at the closing of the

* The Archbishop of Canterbury and the bench of Bishops, no doubt, thought that they were doing a very charitable and christian-like thing, when they recommended Her Majesty to appeal to the benevolent feelings of the wealthy, in aid of the starving artisans of Paisley, Sheffield, and other places. But as the bishops are also lay-legislators for this great manufacturing and commercial nation, it may be expected of them that they should know something of the state of the great interests of the country. They know best how much money was collected—we believe not above £80,000 to £100,000 at the outside. Now, by knowing the state of matters, had they recommended the government to grant the petition of some of our manufacturers, to be allowed to receive payment of some of their just debts due by Americans, in wheat and flour, greater good would have resulted.

The danger to the people and to the sovereign in these times, is the want of acquaintance, by Her Majesty, of the *real* state of affairs in this country.

may torment all the classes of society by a striving at prerogatives, by a meddling and restless disposition, by a spiteful temper introduced into party contentions, and by licentious and extravagant habits of life.

The idea of a democracy is that of the concentrated will and determination of many millions of men; and, according to the course of action taken, carries with it beneficence, terror, or sublimity. No monarch on earth, however absolute on his throne, or at the head of his mighty armies, possesses a power so effective and concentrated, as the chief magistrate of a democracy; while its territory is threatened by a foreign enemy, or during the operations of foreign war.

In bringing to a close these sketches of the effects of Aristocracies on the Condition and Revolutions of Nations, we are desirous of applying to the British aristocratic body, the remarks on the abstract nature of the institution or system of Aristocracy. But, as we have to deal practically with an existing system, we must assail this system, and grapple with its principles, through persons, and must endeavour to move these persons by the usual means of bringing facts, and employing reason, argument, and illustration, to effect a change in favour of the other classes of society, who are injured by the too great power and undue influence of the aristocratic body.

A man who gives a great deal of attention to a subject of this nature, and, after much thought and anxious reflection, comes to such conclusions as are described in this work; and when this man steps out of his retirement, and voluntarily imposes on himself the duty of addressing the public on matters which very deeply concern every individual at present living in this country, he must not flinch

from stating the full case that he has undertaken to explain, and, as an advocate, he must not shrink from uttering what he believes to be the truth, however unwelcome this truth may be to other parties. He must be firmly convinced of the accuracy of his conclusions, arrived at through an analytical process, and he must have entered with earnestness into the subject, carried it on with earnestness, and be quite in earnest in bringing it to an end.

Many of the subjects treated of in this book are very beaten ones; but where can any new doctrine be found among the harsh matters of British fiscal political history? The author has treated the subjects in various styles, if an unpractised writer can be said to have any style at all. What he means is, that he expressed himself exactly as he felt. At times he could not avoid expressing himself in terms which may appear to the reader too strong.

But when a man reflects on the educational destitution which has been allowed to exist, until the terrors of the government were roused to the subject by the outbreak of August 1842, he cannot help expressing himself strongly, if he express any thing at all;* and again, on the perversion of originally benevolent institutions and the misappropriation of charitable funds.

On the state of the mining population of this country, the evidence is so fearful, that the government would most

* In a note at page 95, a remark is made that the sum voted for national education scarcely amounts to as much as is expended on her Majesty's hounds. Such an observation is of course not literal, but yet it approaches in substance to the truth. Upwards of £70,000 were expended in accommodation for the royal horses and dogs—say, for stables and kennels.

The sums expended for education in England were				£76,698
Ditto	ditto	in Wales	.	3,413
				<hr/> £80,111

See letter from J. P. Kay Shuttleworth to Sir James Graham, April 5, 1843.

diminish or remove the odium entertained of his character for his proceedings against his Queen.—His minister Castlereagh committed suicide.

This year is remarkable for a combination of monarchs against the liberties of nations.—This was called the HOLY ALLIANCE.

This year forms the era of the final liberation of the colonies formerly under the dominion of Spain.

1832.—Parliamentary Reform, which was constructive sedition in 1792, was statute-law in 1832.—The French Revolution, among its other consequences, has had that of retarding for forty years a salutary change in the British constitution.—But, as a compensation, the second Revolution of 1830 stimulated the British people to put forth their energies.—The conduct of the people throughout the crisis was calm, orderly, and determined, and altogether worthy of their character; but, in pushing measures to remedy defects and supply deficiencies in the Reform Act of 1832, they will again require to unite, and act with caution, judgment, and resolution.

1842.—This year will for ever be memorable as the ERA of the commencement of the great struggle to free the nation from the worst species of fiscal despotism.—The fate of the nation was hung in suspense, in its domestic concerns and foreign relations, in a very remarkable manner.—In England, Scotland, and Ireland, great masses of the population suffered an extremity of misery which nature could no longer endure, and the country presented the outward signs of domestic convulsion, but without destruction of property or life.—Abroad, in Afghanistan and China, military reverses and successes excited the fears and hopes, and at length gratified the desires, of the people.—The treaty with the United States settled several points which always threatened war, and in this respect it ought to be hailed as a blessing.

1852.

What will be the state of affairs in Great Britain and Ireland in 1852? Under God, the electors of the United Kingdom, supported by the great bulk of the population, must answer the question.

It has been tauntingly said by some French writer, that the British people are only free and powerful during a general election for members to the Legislature—or rather, the electoral body of the people.

THREE *Points to be fixed.*

1st.—Wide extension of the right of voting for members to the Commons House of Parliament.

Mr. PERCEVAL—9th March, p. 757.

The Reform Bill will be the death-blow to the monarchy.—He has no doubt on the subject.

‘ I am confident, Sir, that the hour this bill passes into a law, the death-blow of the monarchy is struck.

‘ I have not a wavering or shadow of doubt on this subject ; and I have no power of body or of mind, that I will not devote to check its progress in every stage.

‘ In conclusion, I beg to express my regret, that I have been so little able to deliver the many thoughts that have arisen in my mind and my heart, during the many nights this debate has lasted, and the many sleepless nights it has led to ; but, I humbly thank my God that I have been permitted to say thus much ; and having endeavoured to do my duty, shall be content.’

Mr. CROKER—19th March, 1831.

This individual is agonized at the apprehension of anarchy with its horrors and miseries.

‘ There is as great a difference between the £10 clause as proposed by the government, and as it at present stands, as there is between reformation and revolution. . . If the bill shall unhappily pass, and become a law, I will assert, and I believe it from the bottom of my heart, and that belief is formed after the most anxious and agonizing reflections, that it will put an extensive power in the hands, not of the people, but of the populace, who will soon destroy their own work like a toy—will pull down the legislature and the State.

‘ They will go on from bad to worse, having no other guide but their passions.

‘ But will it end here ? No ! Anarchy, with all its horrors and miseries, will ensue.

SIR ROBERT INGLIS—19th March, 1831.

A corporation of 33 persons is of more importance than 7,000 citizens at £10 a year.

‘ The constituency of Bath, consists of a mayor, 8 aldermen and 24 common-councilmen, while under the proposed bill, the right of voting will extend to more than 7,000 persons renting £10 houses.’

The constitution will be sacrificed.

‘ I will never consent to sacrifice that constitution under which the glory and the happiness of the country has so long grown together, and especially without something like proof that we are about to exchange it for a better.’

MR. TREVOR—20th March, 1831.

The property, the church, and the monarchy will be destroyed.

‘ In conclusion, I will say, that the more I reflect on this measure, the more I see in it the destruction of the property of the country—of the religious establishments of the country, and, though last, not least of the monarchy itself of the country.’

SIR EDWARD SUGDEN, 22d March, 1831.

He speaks in favour of his countrymen, but votes against them.

‘ Let it not be supposed, that I wish to maintain the Aristocracy, merely as an Aristocracy : I have no such a desire ; but, I do wish to maintain the Aristocracy for the benefit of the lower orders themselves ; and in doing so, I believe that I am supporting their best interests. This is my sincere and honest feeling. Indeed it is impossible that I could act from any other motives on this point ; sprung as I am from the humblest class of society myself, I have no motive, no desire, indeed I could have none, to fly in the face of my fellow-countrymen, and to deprive them of the rights which they enjoy.’

‘ I am convinced that a reformed parliament, such as would be returned by a £10 constituency, would go far to shake the stability of the throne.’ . . . ‘ I am sure that there is not an institution in the country that will not be shaken by this measure.’

Reform Debate—Ten-Pound Qualification.

SIR EDWARD SUGDEN—July 8, 1831.

The unhappy condition of the ten-pound voter.

‘ Now, a person cannot be put down in the lists unless he has paid up the whole of his rent and taxes to the day of registration.

‘ How would this operate with the £10 householder ? When he goes to get registered, he will be asked whether he has paid up all his rent, taxes, and rates, and will be desired to produce receipts.

‘ But how can you compel the landlord or the tax-gatherer to receive the rent or rates at a particular time, and to give receipts ? If the poor man is anxious about his vote, he becomes involved in litigation with his landlord, whenever he wishes to vote ! ’

[Leading article of *Times Newspaper*, 21st Jan. 1842.]

'In proportion as the leaguers and their designs have fallen in public estimation, and in the chances of success within the last six months, the character and influence of the operative class have risen. Both have come forward and explained their views of the existing distress and its remedies, and the superiority in every way, moral, intellectual, and practical, has been with the operatives.'

[Report made by the Society for obtaining free admission to National Monuments and Public Edifices containing Works of Art.]

'The late free exhibition of the prize-pictures by the Art Union Society, evinces a strong, and evidently from the results, a well-timed confidence in the good conduct and taste of the public. The number of persons who availed themselves of the opportunity, was in three weeks seventy-two thousand, without the slightest accident or complaint of misconduct.'

[*Morning Chronicle Newspaper*, 4th February, 1842.]

'The populace appeared resolved to be in good humour. They had congregated for the single purpose of witnessing a spirit-stirring spectacle, and not even the crushing which they had to bear seemed at all to disturb their equanimity.'

'Indeed, from first to last, the whole proceeding was most creditable to the character and temper of the people. Their conduct was scrutinized, no doubt, with vigilance and curiosity by the King of Prussia, and from the evidence thus afforded, he cannot but admit that, under such exciting circumstances, the inhabitants of no metropolitan city in Europe could have deported themselves with more exemplary propriety, nor have evinced towards their sovereign those feelings of deferential respect, unaffected attachment, and unswerving loyalty, which are the peculiar characteristics of the English nation.'

[*Times Newspaper*, 4th February, 1842.]

'Fêted and feasted as the King of Prussia has been, we doubt not that the scene which he yesterday witnessed, when the queen of a free people called together the great council of the empire, with all those time-hallowed ceremonies which have been handed down through a succession of ages, will make a more beneficial impression on his mind than aught else to which his attention may have been directed, though much which has been brought under his notice was well worthy of study and consideration.'

[Leading article of *London Morning Post* Newspaper, 11th Feb. 1842.]

'Let no man confound with the anti-corn-law people, with the great body of the distressed artisans. They are entitled to attention and commiseration. Even their mistakes ought to be received with patience, and set right with good temper.'

[*Morning Herald* Newspaper, 30th March, 1842.]

'It was computed that upwards of 13,000 persons visited the National Gallery on Monday, and 10,000 yesterday; and although at various periods of each day the heat was almost insupportable in consequence of the rooms being crowded nearly to suffocation, not an angry word was heard, and not the slightest damage was done to any portion of the exhibition, but the greatest order and good humour prevailed throughout.'

'At the venerable and splendid structure of Westminster Abbey, the visitors were very numerous both on Monday and yesterday, far exceeding any previous similar occasion, which probably may have arisen from the circumstance of the admission fees having been reduced to sixpence since June last. The high-constable reports that the visitors generally conduct themselves with the strictest propriety.'

'The visitors at St. Paul's Cathedral were very few indeed, which may be attributed to the high price of admission, four shillings and twopence, which is still continued. The number could not be ascertained, but are supposed not to have exceeded fifty.'

[Leading article of *Morning Herald* 28th June, 1842.]

'The patience and orderly conduct which the working classes in our manufacturing districts have exhibited during the severe pressure of distress is a phenomenon upon which we may congratulate, not only the public, but the sufferers themselves. It reflects the highest credit upon their growing intelligence, and is, we trust, a guarantee for their early recovery from their present unfortunate condition. They have frequently been involved in similar calamities, but in no former crisis have they displayed the same sense of their true interests.'

[*Times*, July 7, 1842.]

'The present distress is an evil terrible in itself. The poor, as all seem to agree, have borne it with a most noble patience, in spite of such men as we have spoken of, and must ever speak of, with the scorn they deserve. The rich are debtors, deeply debtors, to the working classes for their patience. All are their debtors who are interested in the peace and order of the community. But in this

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